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CBW

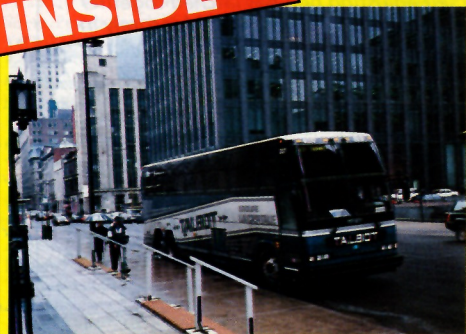
Coach and Bus Week

The PSV industry's news weekly



WAITING TO...
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INSIDE



**On the North
American road
with Henlys
and Volvo
Pages 22-24**

**Spanning the Pennines
EYMS buys CharterplanPage 5**

**Heads roll at Sally
Axe falls in £2m shake-up..Page 16**

champion (as we say up north)

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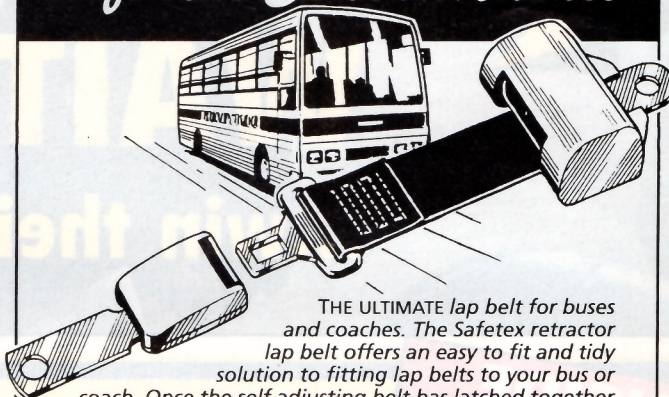
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CBW

Coach and Bus Week
The PSV industry's news weekly

THIS week we were given a very sharp reminder by an operator that *CBW* does not hold a monopoly over the rights to good opinion. While we are perfectly well aware that the views of the editorial team on this magazine will differ from those held by individual readers, it is worth remembering that one person's valid point of view can be anathema to somebody else.

Representing the majority is a difficult and skilled task that we should all appreciate when criticising the industry's representatives — CPT, TCA or CTC.

In our attempts to frame the collective views of the coach and bus industry there is a significant risk that at least some of you will disagree. However, where we are wrong or at variance with the majority view we will always hold our hands up and say so.

This magazine strives to speak for the industry and keep it abreast of all the latest events and trends that will affect your business.

There are issues that need to be aired for the good of all. Sometimes those issues provoke controversy, but in everything we do our guiding remit is to look after the interests of those who pay their subscriptions.

CBW is your magazine. It is your views which are the most important and, to us, the most persuasive.

Call it a customer charter if you like. However, we have a commitment to our readers. If you write, fax or phone with a point of view, we will listen — better still if you tell us something which can go into print.

Our letters pages are one of the best barometers of industry opinion.

So, don't forget, whether it's something you have read, overheard or seen, we want to hear from you. Only then can we most accurately reflect the industry which we serve. If you don't like what you read in the magazine, please do not keep it to yourself. Equally we are always delighted to receive compliments as well.

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Contents

NEWS 4-12

Green Paper - a missed opportunity; Finglands takes over Charterplan from Stagecoach Manchester; Fourways rejects retrofit; Plaxton's revitalised Beaver coach; yellow is the colour of Blackpool's Easy Access HandyBus; Optare further down integral route

LEGAL NEWS 14&15

Townbus 'came very close to revocation'; Manchester Piccadilly TRC decision awaited

TOUR NEWS 16&17

Sally Ferries sales shake-up; Burke joins rival; Flisher leaves Botel

MARKSMAN 18

Questions of an O-licence and environmental objections

DIARY 19

Racing to the bar; is this really a Routemaster?

LETTERS 20

T&G puts its side of the story; how to harness the power of IT

STUDY TOUR 22-24

CBW trip to Canada: what are Henlys and Volvo doing with Prevost?

ROAD TEST 26-28

Optare Excel: driving the new low-floor integral

VEHICLE LAUNCH 30

LDV minibus: something not completely different

DEALS AND DEALERS 32

Berkhofs revamp Thames Transit's Oxford Tube

PEOPLE 51

Knight is Dennis coach sales manager; McCrae moves to Plaxton



Stop press

SCHOOL bus seatbelt debate seems likely to be reopened in wake of this week's accident involving two deckers in Yorkshire.

At time of going to press CBW was told 45 out of around 100 pupils were taken to hospitals in Harrogate and York. One of drivers is among casualties. Injured children were all pupils at Boston Spa Comprehensive.

Vehicles were bus from FirstBus subsidiary Leeds CityLink on school contract and local service bus from Blazefield's Keighley & District on route 760 from Keighley and Leeds to Wetherby.

Collision took place on border of North and West Yorkshire near Tadcaster as K&D bus was waiting to turn right from bridge over A1. Police first informed at 8.45am.

Reports suggested brakes failed on CityLink bus just before crash and driver shouted warning to children and passengers.

Coach and Bus

Green Paper: a qualified welcome

No significant proposals

by Mike Morgan

ALTHOUGH the Government's Green Paper, *Transport The Way Forward*, *The Government's response to the Transport Debate*, failed to identify any significant positive proposals, it has been given a qualified welcome by the coach and bus industry.

In a week when the British Road Federation announced that car and taxi use had grown by 38 per cent in the 10 years from 1984 while coach and bus use had fallen by six per cent, director general, Veronica Palmer, said the Confederation of Passenger Transport was pleased the Government had publicly recognised the environmental and social benefits brought about by increased use of public transport.

However, the Green

Paper is seen by most industry observers as a missed opportunity after the high hopes generated by the Transport Debate announced when Brian Mawhinney was secretary of state for transport.

Much of its public transport content is a statement of changes which have taken place over the last 10 years with bland generalised statements of intent rather than specific policy targets for the future. It says "The bus has a vital role to play in urban transport" and supports the Bus Working Group's drive for quality bus services.

Under the chairmanship of minister for local transport and road safety, Steven Norris, the Bus Working Group aims to



"THE ONLY THING GREEN ABOUT THIS IS THE PAPER IT'S WRITTEN ON"

promote good practice within existing legislation. It is also considering whether further powers need be sought to improve the quality and use of bus services.

Commending the Government's move from a culture of car dependency, Mrs Palmer said: "I look forward to positive measures being introduced to achieve that aim."

"Many countries in Europe have higher levels of car ownership than the UK but lower levels of car use. It is vital for our economic and environmental future that a similar modal shift takes place in this country."

CPT is recommending that:

- Public transport be exempt from road-pricing schemes;
- Operators be given financial incentives to trial alternative fuels;
- Public transport be given priority road space.

It has also suggested:

- Tax subsidies be removed for car users;
- Companies charge clients and employees for car parking;
- Closer co-operation between local authorities and operators over transport infrastructure such as kerbs for low-floor buses.
- See low-floor in Blackpool story - page 12

events

15-17 May: Institute of Road Transport Engineers, IRTE 1996, Telford Exhibition Centre, Telford. Contact IRTE on 0171 630 1111, fax 0171 630 6677

21-23 May: Association of Local Bus Company Managers (ALBUM) 1996 Conference, Cavendish Hotel, Eastbourne. Trade stands available. Details from David Howard, secretary, Eastbourne Buses, Birch Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN23 6PD, tel 01323 721903, fax 01323 643034

23 May: CPT London & Home Counties Region annual Leeds Castle dinner. Details from Jim Carley, regional officer, London & Home Counties, on 0171 831 7546

Coach

Raglan death crash op has ceased to trade

LEWIS Coaches, of Aberdare, one of whose coaches was involved in an accident which resulted in the deaths of 10 people last year, has ceased trading.

The firm, of 4 Kingsway Place, Cwman, Aberdare, had been chartered to convey a party of elderly people to Stratford-upon-Avon, when the accident happened on a roundabout at Raglan.

An investigation by police and DoT vehicle

examiners has taken place and proprietor Ron Lewis is still waiting to hear whether any criminal charges are to be brought.

Mr Lewis said a campaign of harassment and vandalism had forced him to cease trading, and the firm had withdrawn its application to the South Wales traffic commissioner for the renewal of its O-licence in respect of four minibuses and four single deckers.

He admitted there

was a possibility of further action being taken in relation to a number of coaches recently stopped by police and found not to have current vehicle excise licences.

Mr Lewis claims the tax discs were stolen during a spate of vandalism and thefts from the garage which were the main reason for him calling it a day. He said vandals had loosened wheel-nuts, gouged radiators, set down tyres and smashed windows.



Coach

Second deal

IN the week when a deal to sell Charterplan to EYMS is confirmed (see story opposite) a second former PTE coaching subsidiary is expected to be found a buyer.

Sale of Coachline, the 12-coach Rotherham-based operation run as a dedicated coaching unit by Mainline, was understood to be nearing completion. The need for investment coupled with pressure on margins has forced big groups to focus on core activities. The identity of Coachline's potential buyer could not be revealed as CBW went to press.

▼ Coach

Charterplan is sold to EYMS by Stagecoach

Sale expands East Yorkshire Travel coaching into Lancashire

by Andrew Jarosz

CHARTERPLAN, the Manchester-based former GM South Buses' coaching arm, has been sold to Hull-based EYMS group. The sale expands the East Yorkshire Travel (EYT) coaching activities into Lancashire with the acquisition of 27 coaches currently based at Stagecoach Manchester's Charles Street depot in Stockport.

Rather than merge with EYMS' Manchester subsidiary, Finglands, Charterplan will become part of the EYT operation, which recently expanded with the acquisition of Hollings Coaches of North Shields.

Stagecoach Manchester commercial director Ross Griffiths admitted Charterplan wasn't seen as part of the company's continuing business and needed substantial investment in new vehicles, which would be used instead to upgrade the bus fleet. The Charles Street depot will continue to be used under EYT ownership until a new site is found in the Manchester area.

The proposed acquisition, which has now gone to consultation under the proposed transfer of undertakings rule, will bring in a mixed bag of Volvo B10M

and Leyland Tiger coaches, and seven Kässbohrer Setras.

East Yorkshire joint md Peter Shipp, said the group was very pleased with the prospect of the acquisition, which will give the company a further base from which to expand its successful holiday business.

Charterplan grew out of Selnec Travel in 1976, which was the first former PTE coaching operation to hold licences for Continental tours. Selnec Travel itself started tours and excursions in 1972, after coming to an arrange-

ment and subsequent merger with Lancashire United Travel.

In 1975 it moved to Charles Street and acquired Warburton Brothers of Bury. A year later it bought the Godfrey Abbot Group (GAG) of Sale, which operated a regular coach service from Manchester to Paris. GAG included the Sale Dial-a-Ride operation and Altrincham Coachways, which was formerly owned by National Bus Company subsidiary North Western.

When GM buses was split and privatised in 1994, the coaching business with a turnover of £1.6 million

was transferred to GMS, which initially used some coaches to challenge Stagecoach on its express service to Burnley in retaliation against Stagecoach's 192 competitive bus operation to Hazel Grove.

● Prism, the consortium which includes EYMS joint-nds Peter Shipp and Godfrey Burley, has been named preferred bidder for LTS, the London, Tilbury and Southend rail line retendered in February after being awarded to a management-led team in December '95. Prism plans to bring in new rolling stock, lower levels of subsidy and other benefits.



Moving on: Charterplan not part of Stagecoach's continuing business

▼ Bus

EYMS goes low-floor

THE first low-floor buses are heading for EYMS as the group switches to single-deckers, following last year's large orders for Volvo Olympian deckers.

Expected before August are the group's first Dennis Darts and Optare Prisms and, in the Autumn, EYMS will take five Optare Excels, bringing its new vehicle investment up to £1.5 million.

Three Plaxton low-floor 10.6-metre Dennis SLFs are earmarked for the Scarborough Park-and-Ride services. Eight Mercedes-Benz-chassied Prisms, and the five Excels are intended for Hull district routes.

▼ Bus

CentreWest wins again

LONDON bus company CentreWest has received another boost — as it is a member of the Tramtrack Croydon Ltd (TCL) consortium announced as preferred bidder for the £200 million Croydon Tramlink.

The management/employee-owned former London Buses company recently bought London Buslines and Bee Line from Q-Drive.

In working with London Transport on finalising the contract for the 28-kilometre light-rail system, TCL is on track to finance, design, build, operate and maintain the service. **CBW**

INSIDE TRANSIT THIS WEEK

News

Light and heavy rail developments dominate the news this week. Peter Hendy continues CentreWest's growth into a major public transport operator by being part of the consortium selected to build and operate Croydon's Tramlink system. Prism finally gets the nod on LTS. Nat Ex keeps the

industry guessing by paying to operate loss-making Midland Main Line. Final bids are invited for two more franchises. A row has broken out over rail funding in Greater Manchester. And Mainline faces accusations of competing too hard against the controversial Sheffield Supertram.

Plus

The gulf between coach and bus operators continues to widen. Two former PTE companies are selling off their coaching operations — a third looks set to follow. And an innovative partnership in Tyneside is working on a major electric bus project.

News Extra

Is the MMC changing the

way it judges bus takeovers? Exactly how is market share calculated? What are the implications for future deals? We supply the answers to the questions.

Analysis

Part two of our exhaustive financial analysis of National Express, now one of the biggest and most diverse

transport companies in the UK. Its biggest purchase to date has been troubled WMT. But there have also been others. Are they justifying the purchase price? Is the strategy right? And what exactly are the directors getting out of it?

And what's more

There's all the best jobs in public transport.

Fill in the subscription form NOW! Page 51

In brief

Road funding

AI ROAD improvements in Scotland have been put forward for European Commission funding as part of the Trans-European Network (TEN), which is a series of international road links from within the EU to countries on the edge of the union, including peripheral and isolated areas.

Bus/rail info

JONES Motors / Shamrock Travel / Thomas Motors Group, operator of bus services throughout the valleys and the Vale of Glamorgan, has responded to Cardiff Valley Lines charging a premium for timetable information. The group, headed by Mrs Alison Jones, has extended its telephone bus timetable service to include local railway timetable details.

Town study

WALSALL is the focus of a transport demand management study by Oscar Faber. The council wants to develop policies and proposals in its Integrated Transport Strategy for improved access to the town centre by encouraging greater use of bus, rail, cycling and walking.

24-hr routes

LONDON'S night bus network has been reorganised to avoid congestion in Trafalgar Square and to integrate more night and day bus services to provide a network of 24-hour routes. These changes follow on from revisions made last July.

Takeover OK

REFERENCE to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission of MTL's takeover of R&I Tours of London will not be made, the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry having decided to accept the recommendation of the Director General of Fair Trading.

▼ Coach

Belts prompt purchases

Possible retrofit problems eliminated

FOURWAY Coaches of Leeds has elected to replace coaches rather than retrofit them with seatbelts.

Manager Paul Thorogood said: "We don't run old vehicles and it just eliminates a lot of problems we might get with retrofitting."

The company is one of Hughes DAF's first customers for the £125,000 DAF Bus SB3000WS with 53-seat Hungarian-built Ikarus 350 body.

It's also the first brand new coach the 23-vehicle fleet has bought for five years and is its first fully seatbelted 12-metre vehicle. Most of Fourway's larger vehicles are DAFs and the company has a long tradition of buying from Hughes.

"We've tended to



Fourway: first new coach for five years is one of first Ikarus/DAFs

By Alan Millar

go for good quality second-hand coaches in recent years," said Mr Thorogood, "but we like the specification of the Ikarus. Although it's a new project for Hughes DAF, we're very confident

about buying it. We know what a DAF entails and the body is a well-made alternative to products already on the market."

Rather than replacing any existing vehicles, the Ikarus is an extra vehicle bought to handle increased business. Like

the rest of the Fourway fleet, it will operate on a cross-section of tours, contracts and private hires.

Hughes DAF has modified the specification of the body to increase luggage locker space and fit the seats on raised platforms.

▼ Coach

Smith's drops commuter routes

COMPETITION on one of the north Kent commuter coach routes ended when Smith's of Sittingbourne withdrew its eight-vehicle operation from Sheerness, Faversham and Sittingbourne into the capital.

South Eastern & Metropolitan traffic commissioner, Brigadier Michael Turner, gave Smith's special dispensation to withdraw the routes ahead of the statutory 42-day notice and neighbouring operator Chalkwell Coach Hire, which had been competing with Smith's since July 1992, increased the frequency of its service from Monday this week.

David Horsford, Smith's managing director, said the decision was prompted by an increase in work from tour companies. "We can also cut the amount of administrative work we do by no longer doing commuter services," he said.

Fleet size is expected to be reduced "but we don't yet know by how much and it won't be by as many as eight coaches."

Chalkwell has increased its com-

muter operation from seven through coaches to 11 by redeploying its existing fleet and is also continuing to operate three feeder midcoaches to serve housing estates which are not accessible by the Plaxton-bodied Leyland Tigers which operate to and from London.

It has also promised to honour any season tickets sold by Smith's. Chalkwell operations manager David Everett told CBW: "Our view is that, if you don't do that, you take a fair amount of blame for the other service being withdrawn, customer confidence then disappears and half the people go back to rail and refuse to travel by coach again."

He says that competition between the two companies, and keen prices of about 60 per cent of typical rail fares, expanded the market on this corridor. More than half the passengers are female, according to Mr Everett.

The combined service, he says, will eliminate some excess capacity and will also even out the timetable. Morning departures are within 80 minutes.

▼ Coach and Bus

End of an era in NE

SIXTY-SIX years of operation have come to an end in the North East, with the closure of Morpeth-based Raisbeck, and the sale of its one bus service and three vehicles to British Bus subsidiary Northumbria.

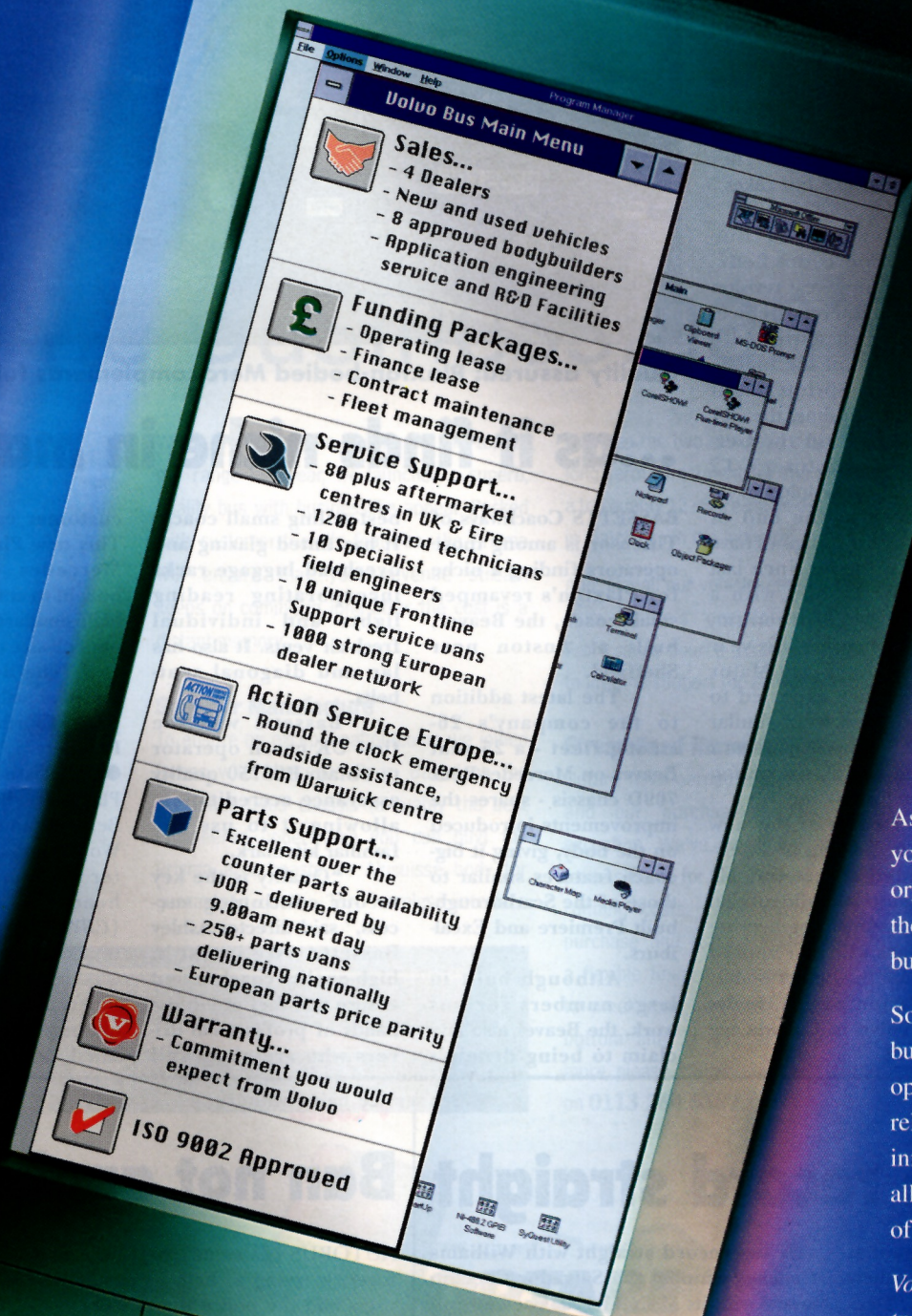
Included in the sale is the unique Volvo B7 prototype, which will not be operated by its new owners, but is now available for sale. Dating from 1985, the B7 was a Volvo development vehicle, bodied by East Lancs, and is the only example of its kind in the country.

The closure is understood to be due to the retirement of the owners.



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▼ Coach

Beaver selling like 'hot-cakes'

Big coach features revive sales

MERCEDES-BENZ' impending minibus model changes have not deterred Plaxton from revitalising the coach version of its long-running Beaver body.

Built at Anston on the site of its Kirkby dealership, the Beaver's new-look interior has revived sales to operators in the market for a small coach with big-coach features.

Forced-air ventilation and three-point seatbelts are standard for 1996 in an interior which mirrors the manufacturer's Premiere and Excalibur full-size coaches - moquette to roof, bodysides and luggage racks; heavy-duty lino and solid rubber floor; gangway carpet; curtains and individual reading lights. Rear luggage capac-

By Mike Morgan

ity is 1.94 cubic metres supplemented by side lockers.

On 711D chassis, the 25 seater costs £59,250 and on six-speed 814D the 33 seater costs £65,750. Sales and marketing director David Quainton expects 50 to be built this year. "They are selling like hot cakes," he said.

However, in line with Mercedes-Benz' planned three-year revision of its commercial vehicle range which started with the launch of the highly-acclaimed Sprinter light van and minibus, the 711 and 814 within the German manufacturer's T2 range are scheduled to be replaced at the end of 1996. Euro 2 engines have been available since last year on T2 but, with a £1,700 price premium, most deliveries this year will be Euro 1. Major changes are expected to include new front similar to the Sprinter, new Euro 2 engine and air-suspension option for PSV use.

Details of the new vehicles remain a closely-guarded secret but Mr Quainton is confident that only minimal engineering changes will be required to adapt the Beaver body.

● Plaxton parent Henlys and Volvo in Canada see page 22



Quality assured: Plaxton-bodied Merc complements full-size fleet

...as it finds niche in market

BASSETTS Coachways of Tittensor is among those operators finding a niche for Plaxton's revamped small coach, the Beaver, built at Anston near Sheffield.

The latest addition to the company's 26-strong fleet - a 25-seat Beaver on Mercedes-Benz 709D chassis - shares the improvements introduced on the body, giving it big-coach features similar to those of the Scarborough-built Premiere and Excaliburs.

Although built in large numbers for bus work, the Beaver also lays claim to being Britain's

best-selling small coach. It has tinted glazing and overhead luggage racks incorporating reading lights and individual fresh-air vents. It also has lap and diagonal seatbelts.

Bassetts was the first UK coach operator to obtain BS5750 quality assurance accreditation, allowing it to use the familiar kitemark.

"Quality is the key to our continuing success," said director Ashley Bassett. "We invest in high-quality coaches and ensure that they are in the hands of professional drivers who are given full

customer care training. This new Plaxton-bodied Mercedes has been bought to complement the high standards we offer in our full-size coach fleet."

The Beaver will be joined shortly by the company's fourth new Plaxton Premiere.

● OUR story about the Plaxton-bodied Mercedes-Benz minibus supplied to Woods Coaches of Leicester was unfortunately headed 'Alexander' (CBW, 20 April). As the text made clear, the bus was indeed bodied by Plaxton with its familiar, and normally easily recognised, Beaver bodywork.



Revised coach interior

▼ Coach

Setting the record straight

PROUD winner of the Berkhof award at this year's Brighton coach rally, Matthew Haynes in Banstead Coaches' new Dennis Javelin-chassied coach, was incorrectly referred to as winner of the Caetano award in last week's CBW.

Our listing of trophy and award winners on page eight (CBW, 27 April)

sets the record straight with Williams Coaches winning the Salvador Caetano award with its MAN 11.190/Caetano and Mr Haynes, 23-year-old son of driver of the year, Dudley Haynes, picking up the Berkhof award.

Our apologies for any confusion caused by this error.

▼ Coach

Ban not applicable

AUTOBUS Classique, the Rotherham-based manufacturer, is trying to help its customers alert other road users and the police that a 7500 kg GVW coach is not affected by the third/fourth lane motorway ban.

The rear window of its Nouvelle midicoach of the year now has a clear message stating the fact: "This coach is permitted to use the outside lane of the motorway."





The Businessman's Bus

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▼Coach and Bus

Mobil's Cleanerburn Diesel Plus wins the vote of confidence from Trent and Barton Buses

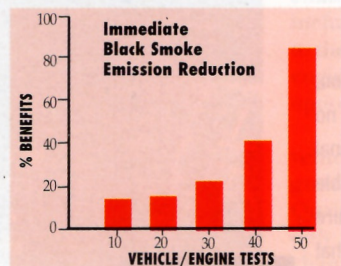
TRENT and Barton Buses, the leading bus operator in Derby and Nottingham, has just signed a new contract with Mobil, one of the world's major oil companies. Trent and Barton Buses will now be running all its 385 buses on Mobil's Cleanerburn Diesel Plus. Here we look at what this contract means for Trent and Barton Buses and why the company expects this business decision to contribute directly to the bottom line.

Local school children celebrate a brighter future and a cleaner environment with Trent and Barton Buses and Mobil ►



Making the right choice for the commercial fleet

MOBIL Cleanerburn Diesel Plus is the most cost-effective environmentally friendly diesel available in the UK. An innovative fuel, Cleanerburn not only contributes to cleaner air, but provides fuel economy and power advantage over other diesels.



The key difference between Mobil's product and other diesel fuels is a unique additive which makes the fuel burn more efficiently. This not only means that particulates in a vehicle's exhaust fumes are reduced, but engine power is boosted, providing improved fuel economy. Independent tests have proven that Cleanerburn reduces particulate emissions by up to 30%, cuts black smoke emissions by as much as 80% and provides improved fuel economy and a power advantage of up to 3%.

Save over £100,000 per annum

"THE benefits of Cleanerburn are clearly enormous" said Ian Morgan, Commercial Director, Trent and Barton Buses. "By using Mobil's fuel, Trent and Barton Buses can afford to combine hard business objectives – in terms of engine care and improved performance – with our desire to act as a responsible corporate citizen by doing what we can to improve air quality for our passengers and for the people throughout the area we operate in."

In addition to its environmental and performance benefits, Cleanerburn also contains a detergent to maintain cleaner engine fuel systems. This helps to prolong engine life and improve fuel economy, providing more miles to the gallon than regular diesel.

Furthermore, and contrary to popular belief, Mobil Cleanerburn Diesel Plus was introduced to replace all Mobil's conventional diesel with no price increase.

Mobil estimates that customers who purchase 10 million litres of fuel per annum will be able to make a cost saving

of over £100,000 annually added straight to the bottom line. Trent and Barton Buses anticipate making a saving of up to 3% on their annual fuels bill.



Ian Morgan, Commercial Director, Trent and Barton Buses (right) seals the deal with Phil Rice of Mobil (left)

Better for local people too

"THE UK has the toughest air quality standards in the world and the use of innovative cleaner fuels helps meet these standards" says Harry Rowson, Director, Fuels Marketing, Mobil. "By deciding to make the switch to Cleanerburn, Trent and Barton Buses will be contributing towards the creation of a more pleasant environment for the people in Nottingham and Derby".

Fantastic facts

- 50% of the Trent and Barton Fleet is now under 5 years old – the company will be replacing 30 of its buses in 1996 with brand new vehicles
- Trent and Barton Buses travel 14.5 million miles each year and the company sells over 30 million bus tickets annually
- By switching to Mobil Cleanerburn Diesel Plus, the company's 385 vehicles will emit nearly 4,000 kg fewer particulates each year – that's 4 tonnes of soot!

Mobil Direct Fuels Hotline

Jane Wynn – 01908 853690
Stuart Marshall – 01908 853636

Reap the benefits

IF you want to reap the same benefits as Trent and Barton Buses and find out how Cleanerburn can help improve your business profitability, please call us on the Mobil Direct Fuels Hotline. The company will be pleased to send more information – please mention that you saw this article in Coach and Bus Week.

▼ Bus

Going low-floor beside the sea

Eight Optare Excels head for Blackpool

WHAT started as a post-deregulation incursion into untried territory has turned into one of the country's first commercial operations supporting low-floor buses.

Back in 1987 Fylde Borough Transport attacked the lucrative promenade tramway operated by its neighbour, Blackpool Transport. But at the end of the first Summer season when the resort's visitors had gone home, Fylde md Ian Marsh started looking for an alternative use for the Dodge minibuses acquired for the service.

Turning inland he noticed Blackpool Transport's Winter timetable had reduced services in certain parts of the town.

By Mike Morgan

Fylde filled the gap with its 44 group of services.

Linking the Mereside housing estate and Cleveleys via the town centre and some middle-class areas in between, the route became so successful that, at the end of the Winter, the minibuses stayed on the 44 and Fylde had to buy additional vehicles to restart its competitive promenade operations.

Fylde, now branded Blue Buses, was subsequently bought by its management before being sold on to Blackpool Transport, which had remained in municipal ownership. Some rationalisation took place

but the 44 with its A and B route variations remained on its 15-minute frequency - including evening and weekends when a small portion of the route receives subsidy.

To cope with increased passenger demand full-size Optare Deltas supplement the Dodges. However, Mr Marsh says the larger bus is not suited to the type of roads found on estates at either end of the route so the company needed an alternative intermediate-sized vehicle.

Eight of Optare's new 10-metre Excels were ordered, representing the 44's peak-vehicle requirement, and this choice pre-



The colour for the Blue Bus Easy Access is...yellow

sented the opportunity to convert the whole service to low-floor.

Easy Access Handy Bus branding has been adopted using a highly-visible yellow livery adapted from that first seen on Blackpool's minibuses.

Thirty-five drivers have volunteered for customer care training before going on the 25-line rota which covers the route. Half the service converts to low-floor at the start of next month and the remainder about four weeks later.

Before going live Blue Buses persuaded

Lancashire County Council to allocate £135,000 for improved infrastructure at bus stops, banning parked cars and raising kerbs where necessary.

Local disability groups have been consulted on facilities within the Excels which have provision for one wheelchair but no ramp.

Mr Marsh says that experience in other parts of the country show encouraging increases in passengers where low-floors are introduced. The company is to monitor their effect on the 44 in Blackpool.

Conventional, but bristling with innovation

STYLED by Optare's long-term design consultant, Fran Cush, the Excel's clean modern image is achieved through a con-

ventional box-steel structure clad with aluminium panels and powered through 'T' drive-line yet bristling with innovation.

Russell Richardson says lower production costs and potential export markets dictated the use of steel technology rather than the Aluisse aluminium structure which the company pioneered in the UK on Delta single-deck and Spectra single-deck designs.

Based on the same principles as the MetroRider midibus, the all-welded steel frame will be assembled on a new assembly line at the Crossgates factory where efficiencies have been increased through investment in new technology.

However, an

important saving in production costs is achieved through leaving assembly of some of the most expensive components till last. Drive-line and front axle are not installed until the bus has taken shape.

As an added benefit the ability to slot-in the rear subframe at a late stage in production also allows engineers to remove the complete unit for repairs.

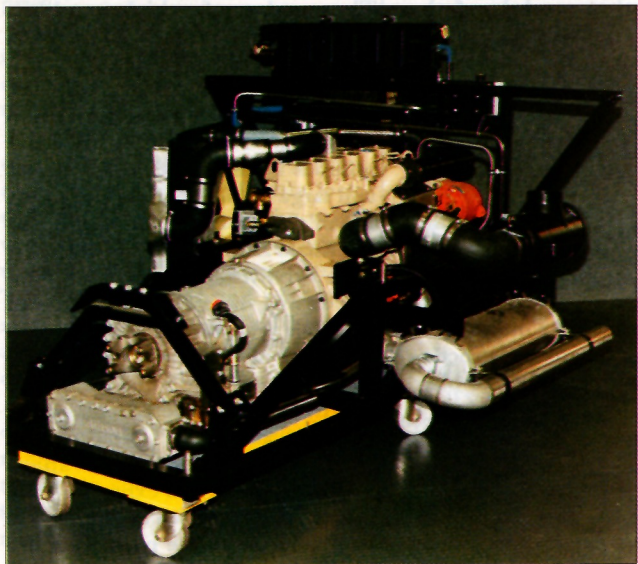
Euro 2 Cummins B series engine, Allison 'World-Series' B300R gearbox, cooling and exhaust systems can be unbolted in one unit while, at the front, the MAN low-floor axle is assembled progressively with wheelbox forming an integral part of the frame at an early stage.

Optare md Russell

Richardson says the bus has been designed around its brakes. With 22.5-inch wheels the bus has 'S' cam drum brakes and the Allison gearbox incorporates integral retarder.

To preserve the low floor, electrical, air and heating/ventilation systems are built into the roof where they are protected from the elements and provide easy access for maintenance. When specified, air-conditioning can be incorporated.

Tinted and bonded windows form part of the structure's strength yet are designed to give a smooth exterior and allow occupants to look out no matter where seated. The driver benefits with deep single-curvature windscreen.



Power-pack subframe can be removed as one unit

▼ Bus

Exceeding expectations

Advance orders worth around £8 million

By Mike Morgan

ADVANCE orders worth around £8 million have exceeded Optare's expectations for its new low-floor bus.

Available in four lengths from 9.6 metres to 11.5 metres, the Excel enters the market at a competitive £78,000 to £85,000 price. First deliveries are to Blackpool Transport for its Fylde Blue Bus operation.

One is already being used for driver familiarisation and another seven are on the production line at Optare's Crossgate plant, with three scheduled for completion for next month's partial conversion of a busy cross-town service to low-floor.

A further quartet will complete the transformation of the service during June.

The Excel, a fully-

integral low-floor bus, was previewed last Autumn after a two-year development programme and exhaustively tested over the Winter months.

At the official handover of the second production Excel to Fylde md Ian Marsh, Optare md Russell Richardson said: "To have an order book for nearly 100 Excels before the first one enters service is excellent testimony to the strength of our design."

"It proves we understand the market where it matters and have the essential intellectual and engineering resources necessary to design a complete and sophisticated product fit for the purpose and that is right from day one."

In addition to Blackpool Transport, other ini-

tial Excel customers include: Reading, Metrobus, Thorpes, Trent, Nottingham City Transport, Kinch (CBW, 20 April) and East Yorkshire.

Thorpes, which is taking four to replace wheelchair-lift equipped Mercedes-Benz minibuses on London Transport-Buses' Stationlink service, is the only order for the shortest option, but Mr Russell says the remainder are split equally between the other lengths. "The bigger it is the more cost effective it becomes," he said.

With an emphasis on securing new markets, Optare is developing a left-hand-drive Excel with 220bhp MAN engine and, when guide-wheels become available on the MAN-sourced front axle, a guided bus option could



First Excel: Ian Marsh and Russell Richardson

be produced - as could a gas-powered Excel using the appropriate version of the standard Cummins B-series engine.

● The first factory-built CNG-powered MetroRider (using Cummins B-series)

is nearing completing at Crossgates. It is being built for Reading Transport and will be followed by another two for operation in Cambridge by Stagecoach subsidiary, Cambus.

Another step along the all-integral road



Integral vehicles will account for 95% of output

EXCEL is another step along the road to transforming Optare from being a bodybuilder on other makers' chassis to manufacturer developing and completing its own complete products.

Speaking at the launch of the first production models of the Leeds-based company's low-floor bus first unveiled last Autumn md Russell Richardson said integral products would account for almost 75 per cent of Optare's output as the Excel joins its existing MetroRider minibuses.

Based on a strategy of 'one-stop shopping' where looking after the complete product "has significant advantages", the company has been moving away from conventional body on chassis construction since it acquired the rights to build the MetroRider in 1990 when it built 65 integrals out of its 167-vehicle output.

This year it expects integral output for the UK to reach 270 and body on chassis production around 80 as it targets a further increase in total turnover to £40 million.

Last year, Optare's 10th anniversary, the company achieved a record £34 million turnover. Since the company was acquired by its management and employees in 1993 there has been an increase in sales revenue of over 40 per cent. The number of vehicles and kits sold increased from 280 in 1993 to a planned 600 in 1996.

This increase is partly the result of the export venture in Malaysia. There the MetroRider midibus is assembled under licence and large numbers are updating the urban transport system in the capital, Kuala Lumpur.

Mr Richardson says the new Excel will have its export debut later this year when it is launched in left-hand drive form for Continental markets. He said he would shortly be lifting the lid on another "all-new, all-Optare" product and, with more production space needed to cope with expanding output, negotiations to acquire extra land adjacent to the plant were taking place.

● Excel road test, page 28

CBW

▼ ADVERTISEMENT

▼ Coach

Bus Eireann orders 35 Premieres

BUS Eireann, the biggest coach operator in the Republic of Ireland, has placed a repeat order with Plaxton for a further 25 Premiere bodies on Volvo B10M chassis.

The company put its first Premieres

into service at the start of this year, with a batch of 10 for use on express services from Dublin to the north-west of the country.

The next 25, to be delivered this summer, will continue Bus Eireann's

programme of service improvements and are to be used on long-distance routes in the south and west.

All of the Bus Eireann Premieres are on Volvo B10M chassis, supplied by Yeates Bus & Coach.



Service improvements continue with next 25 coaches

▼ Coach

Wider appeal for Plaxton's Excaltibur

Plaxton has widened the appeal of its award-winning Excaltibur with the launch of a simple trim specification, based on that used in the company's market-leading Premiere model.

"Following on from Excaltibur's success in winning the 1995 Coach of the Year award we are eager to make the benefits of Excaltibur operation available to as wide a market as possible," explains Kevin Wood, Plaxton's coach sales manager.

"The Excaltibur is the flagship of the Plaxton coach range and it is equally a flagship vehicle for the operators who buy it. By making it available with a simplified specification we can offer Excaltibur style and comfort in a package which will be available at a very competitive price.

"This broadens the Excaltibur's appeal and also further demonstrates just what good value the Plaxton range is."

Key changes include the fitment of conventional open luggage racks instead of aircraft-style lockers and the removal of the wood veneer trim inserts, both of which will be offered as optional extras. The sophisticated and effective microprocessor-controlled heating and ventilation system is retained on all Excaltibur models.

Both Premiere and Excaltibur continue to be available with a wide range of options, allowing customers to specify coaches tailored to suit their operational requirements.

▼ Coach

Plaxton strengthens Coach Sales Team

PLAXTON Coach and Bus, Britain's leading coachbuilder, has strengthened its coach sales team with the appointment of two regional sales managers. Barry McCrae is southern area sales manager and Martin Arthington has just taken over responsibility for sales in North Wales, the north-west of England, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

They join eastern region sales manager Bob Walmsley to complete the team headed by coach sales manager Kevin Wood. Barry has joined Plaxton from Yeates and brings with him 13 years

experience in the coach industry. Martin comes from Dennis where he was responsible for Javelin coach sales in the north-west.

"With recent growth in the total market and continuing growth in Plaxton's share we clearly needed additional experienced sales managers to help us maintain the momentum of our current sales success," says Kevin Wood. "There have been parts of the country where our resources were spread thinly and these appointments enable us to devote more effort to promoting both Premiere and Excaltibur to new and existing customers."

▼ Coach

Excelsior takes 30 Plaxton

Excelsior of Bournemouth, the south coast's largest coach holiday company, has increased its order for Plaxton-bodied Volvo B10Ms to 30. The first 24 will be delivered over the next few months, followed by an additional six later in the year.

Excelsior is taking a mix of body specifications for different aspects of its operations. For its Continental holidays it will be using Excaltiburs while, on its extensive UK holiday programme, it will operate Premiere 320s.

Excelsior also operates a Bournemouth to London shuttle service and on this it will be using Premiere 350s which offer more luggage space than the 320 - an important consideration on a busy shuttle operation.

"We have had good ser-



The first will be delivered over the next few months

vice from the Premiere and Excaltibur over the past four years," says Len Clarke, managing director of Excelsior. "The 30 joining the fleet this year represent our biggest single intake of Plaxton-bodied coaches for

many years and underline our satisfaction with the product and Plaxton's after-sales support."

Excelsior operates 55 coaches, the majority of which are Plaxton-bodied Volvo B10Ms.

Plaxton Coach & Bus, Eastfield, Scarborough, YO11 3BY. Tel: 01723 581500. Fax: 01723 581328

▼ Maintenance

Grayline has authorisation cut by two

ROBERT Gray's O-licence authorisation has been reduced from four vehicles to two by Scottish traffic commissioner Michael Betts. The commissioner also suspended the licence until he receives confirmation Mr Gray's two vehicles have obtained new MoT certificates.

Mr Gray, of 17 Lochies Road, Clackmannan, Alloa, who trades as Grayline Coach & Taxi Hire, of Clackmannan, appeared at a Glasgow disciplinary inquiry over a number of prohibitions notices on his vehicles and convictions for an offence of using a vehicle without a valid test certificate, two offences of using vehicles without Certificates of Initial Fitness, and one offence of using a vehicle with defective lights.

The commissioner had also been concerned about Mr Gray's financial standing but, after considering the financial evidence produced, he was satisfied.

▼ Maintenance

Severe warning

ROUTSEPEK Coach Hire Ltd has received a severe warning about its maintenance standards from Eastern traffic commissioner Brigadier Compton Boyd.

The company, of 3 Elms Close, Earsham, Bungay, Suffolk, appeared before the commissioner at a disciplinary inquiry, at which it outlined proposed changes in its maintenance arrangements.

▼ Maintenance

Townbus badly vandalised

BUSES set on fire as they were going down the road, seats slashed and seats kicked in were operator Carl Mather's biggest problems at the moment, he told a public inquiry.

But in cutting Mr Mather's O-licence authorisation from eight vehicles to six, North Western deputy traffic commissioner Alan Cattell said Mr Mather could not blame others for shortcomings in his vehicles and he had come very close to the revocation or suspension of his licence.

Mr Mather, of Wyrebank Garage, Cocker Avenue, Poulton le Fylde, Lancashire, who trades as Townbus, of Poulton le Fylde, appeared at a Manchester disciplinary inquiry at which he was also seeking to increase the authorisation on the licence to 15 vehicles.

DoT vehicle examiner Michael Dobson said that, during a maintenance investigation in October, five ve-

hicles were examined and three immediate prohibitions and four defect notices issued. One vehicle was given an immediate prohibition in a spot check carried out with Lancashire County Council.

Two vehicles were inspected at four days notice and both given immediate prohibitions. A driver defect reporting system intro-

He'd had buses set on fire as they were going down the road, seats slashed and seats kicked in. He had just handed one of his school contracts back

duced following a previous public inquiry in January 1995 had fallen into disuse within a couple of months. Mr Mather had a high-bridge double decker that would not fit on to the main inspection pit.

Since the public in-

Inquiry hears previously-assau

by Michael Jewell

quiry in January, there had been a series of prohibition notices issued, said Mr Dobson. If 15 vehicles were parked at the premises it would not be possible to gain access to the rear of the workshop. The yard was cluttered with scrap and a concreted area had not been completed. The parking arrangements were not adequate for the existing fleet of eight vehicles.

When he visited Mr Mather's premises at night, he found two vehicles parked in the road, said Mr Dobson. The improvements made after the last public inquiry had not been sustained.

Mr Mather said one of the immediate prohibitions had been changed to a delayed one because of vandalism by school children, who had put a piece of chewing gum in the emergency door buzzer. A defective exhaust had not been reported by

the driver. It would have been picked up at the vehicle's next preventative maintenance inspection. The workshop roof had been raised since the vehicle examiner's visit to accommodate the double decker.

In reply to the deputy commissioner, Mr Mather said the garage roof had been blue asbestos. It had cracked when being removed and the whole place had looked like a bomb had hit it. That was why the paperwork was not on the notice board for drivers to report defects. It would be about a month after the vehicle examiner's visit that the roof was completed.

They were now better organised as they had improved office facilities. Agreeing that he had a high turnover of staff, Mr Mather said he had a problem in obtaining capable staff. He



If eight-metre limit remains, replacement Centreline buses would have to be purpose built,

sed then almost banned

red operator has more problems

had now taken on John Ryan as head mechanic and he had dramatically improved the fleet's condition. He employed two maintenance staff. He also had an independent contractor to inspect the vehicles from the beginning of April.

A vehicle taken for test was found to have three loose wheelnuts, said Mr Mather. The fitter concerned was dismissed and he took on a new crew of fitters starting three days later. Last year the new gas regulations, requiring exhaust emissions to be reduced by 20 per cent, had taken up a lot of the mechanics' time.

He was based on a big industrial estate and there was plenty of land available. The yard had now been tidied up and the concreted area extended. He had put a load of tarmac down. It would hopefully be finished in the Summer.

The biggest problem

he had at the moment was vandalism, said Mr Mather. He'd had buses set on fire as they were going down the road, seats slashed and seats kicked in. He had just handed one of his school contracts back because of the amount of vandalism he'd had. He had quietened things down by putting additional staff on the buses.

It was expensive, but he needed to do it every so often. He required the additional vehicles as he was looking to get further contracts. He would employ more staff if he was granted additional vehicles.

Mr Cattell said a further seven prohibition notices had been imposed on Mr Mather's vehicles, though six of them had been issued before the last public inquiry.

Questioned by the deputy commissioner, Mr Mather said in January 1995 the commissioner had decid-

ed "just to slap wrists" and had given him a warning. At the time he'd had a lot of problems, having been in and out of hospital after being assaulted. He was also in and out of court for the same reason. He took on extra staff to cope, but those people had let him down. He thought the staff he now had were more professional.

Mr Ryan said he had

Mr Dobson said there seemed to have been improvements, but there were improvements after the last public inquiry which were short lived

started with Townbus six months ago. Some of the maintenance procedures had been lacking. He was trying to bring the vehicles in for more frequent checks. He had tidied up the workshop and got a grip of the paperwork. They very rarely

missed anything now.


Mr Dobson said there seemed to have been improvements, but there were improvements after the last inquiry which were short lived. Cutting the authorisation, and refusing the variation application, Mr Cattell said he thought Mr Mather had too many vehicles. He had been warned in January 1995 and commissioners did not repeat warnings. Since then there had been further prohibitions.

He thought there might be some considerable improvements on the horizon but he had to stress for the last time that the improvements must be sustained. Mr Mather could not blame others. If he appeared at a third public inquiry he was likely to lose his licence.

Mr Cattell said he would ask the vehicle examiner to carry out a further check in six months. It was up to Mr Mather to ensure the improvement continued.

▼ Maintenance

One less for Towler

 THE O-licence authorisation of Towlers Coaches has been cut from 11 vehicles to 10 at a Cambridge disciplinary inquiry.


Alan Towler, trading as Towlers Coaches, of Church Road, Emneth, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire, appeared before Eastern traffic commissioner Brigadier

He had failed to comply with his statement of intention that he would keep his vehicles in a fit and serviceable condition

Compton Boyd. The commissioner cut the authorisation on the grounds prohibition notices had been issued to Mr Towler's vehicles and he had failed to comply with his statement of intention that he would keep his vehicles in a fit and serviceable condition.

▼ Traffic Regulation

Decision on Piccadilly TRC awaited

 NORTH Western traffic commissioner Brian Horner has reserved decision on whether to lift a Traffic Regulation Condition banning the operation of frequent services and buses of more than eight metres long from Fountain Street, Manchester, between Spring Gardens and Market Street, adjacent to the city's new-look Piccadilly Bus Station.

Manchester City Council successfully requested the imposition of the TRC last November because of perceived danger to shoppers crossing Fountain Street after walk-

ing up Market Street, one of Britain's busiest pedestrianised streets. It feared that bus companies, who were prevented from

Roger Hough said the junction of Market Street and Fountain Street was fifth on the city centre's accident blackspot list. The council was concerned about the very large number of pedestrians who crossed at that particular junction

crossing the city via Piccadilly, would use Fountain Street instead.

Both GM Buses North and GM Buses South opposed the continuation of the TRC.

The city council's

principle assistant engineer, Roger Hough said the junction of Market Street and Fountain Street was fifth on the city centre's

tre's accident blackspot list. The council was concerned about the very large number of pedestrians who crossed at that particular junction. People were careless in crossing it, he said.

GM Buses North's network manager, Guy Warren, maintained that a light-controlled pedestrian crossing gave people a safe crossing if they used it properly. David Ashworth, business manager of GM Buses South, said his company ran the Centreline service between Piccadilly and Victoria railway stations, using Fountain Street. The fleet of 24 seaters used on the service were now up to 12 years old and replacements under eight metres in length would have to be purpose built.

Mr Horner is to announce his decision in writing.





claims GM Buses South

▼ UK

Sales staff axed in Sally sha



Changes: Bill Moses

SENIOR sales staff, including UK sales manager Roger Simister, were among the casualties at Sally Ferries as Sally Line chief executive Bill Moses introduced the first phase of a major shake-up at Sally Line.

Mr Moses, who took up his position with the Ramsgate-based ferry operator in the Spring, had warned from the outset that at least 60 jobs would have to go as the

Jobs go as ferry firm aims to make savings of £2m

by William Golden

company sought to make savings of more than £2 million this year.

Mr Simister, who launched a successful Customline Destinations brochure and introduced other deals for coach operators, left in the middle of last week. He is understood to be considering a number of options. He was joined by

other sales executives, Phil Hankin, Phil Parker and Colin Judge.

Staying with the company is senior sales executive Sue Whale.

Along with the job cuts, Mr Moses had announced plans to introduce fast-ferry services on

its routes to Dunkerque and Ostend. Last week he is said to have rejected the current designs, saying the loading capacity and other factors were not adequate - this at a time when rival operators, Stena Line and P&O European Ferries are introducing similar craft this Summer.

Mr Moses remained

▼ UK

Burke joins rival

HAROLD Burke, former group sales manager at Holiday Club Pontin's, has joined rivals Butlin's and Haven to take up the newly-created post of head of sales for groups.

Mr Burke, who is based in Hemel Hempstead, heads up a joint Butlin's and Haven sales team, including group reservations staff for both brands, and the special events team for Butlin's. It is the first time group sales functions for both brands have been pulled together.

Paul Atherton, sales director of ParkWorld Holidays - the holding company for Butlin's and Haven - said Mr Burke would be expanding the group business by targeting coach operators, clubs, societies and large conventions.

"He developed the business from these sources at Pontin's and that company's ratio of groups to total business is currently far higher than ParkWorld's," said Mr Atherton. "We believe he is one of the foremost



Switch: Harold Burke

players in the market and we look forward to him bringing these skills to a bigger company, where there are more opportunities."

▼ UK

Theatre package to attract groups

A HOTEL and theatre in Southend-on-Sea have joined forces to offer a special weekend break in a bid to attract more coach groups to the Essex resort.

The package, from the Palace Theatre and Tower Hotel, costs £75 per person and includes two nights accommodation, all meals, a theatre ticket and backstage tour.

It is valid until June when the theatre's repertory company takes a break until September. The Winter season, which will run through to February, will start with a performance of *Me And My Girl*.

For more information contact Marion Orchard, marketing manager at the Palace Theatre, on 01702 347816, or Malcolm Taylor, manager of the Tower Hotel, on 01702 348635.

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ke-up

undeterred, however, and said he was still looking for suitable vessels but would not be rushed into any decision for the sake of image.

● Paul Flisher, who ran the southern end of operations for Botel Services, is no longer with the company.

Mr Flisher, who joined the Rotherham-based wholesaler less than 12 months ago, left at the beginning of last week.

▼ Europe

Tolls in Austria

OPERATORS planning trips to, or through, Austria in 1997 should be advised that motorway tolls are being introduced from 1 January (CBW, 27 April) and all vehicles will be required to display an Autobahnvignette (motorway sticker).

Rates for coaches will be 300 Austrian schillings (approximately £19) for one week; 1,500 schillings (£96) for two months; and 6,000 schillings (£387) for one year.



Dressed for the part: re-launching the China Link service are (from left) Carol Probyn as Royal Doulton figurine Ninette; Michael Hughes as Josiah Wedgwood; and Cathy Shingler as Maud Butters - all from the Gladstone Pottery Museum, one of the attractions en route

▼ UK

China Link seven days a week

VISITORS to the Potteries will find it easier to visit the area's china factories and museums now that the China Link bus service has been made year-round.

It is being operated by local bus company PMT and will run seven days a week. There will be a more frequent service and access to factories and shops not

included on last year's routes, when the China Link did not run from January to March.

A China Link Dayrider Ticket will cost £3.50 and bus stops will be clearly marked with distinctive China Link signposts.

Jane Randall, Stoke-on-Trent tourism officer, said: "The British Ceramic Confederation took the

opportunity during the Winter months to review the whole operation of the China Link bus service. The major aim when we first set it up was to offer easy access to as many of our factory tours, seconds shops, museums and attractions as possible.

"We have been delighted by the response but the time had clearly come to make changes

and, hopefully, to improve things even more for visitors."

Tony Corum, customer services manager for PMT, said: "We are pleased to be a part of the new-look China Link and are confident our network of regular and inter-connecting services will allow visitors easy access to the Potteries' attractions."

CBW

Eurowatch

WEATHER

DIESEL PRICES

HOLIDAY POUND

City	Average temperature last week	City	Average temperature last week	Country	Diesel price per litre in Sterling	Country	Diesel price per litre in Sterling	Country	Currency exchange rate	Country	Currency exchange rate
(Courtesy AA Roadwatch)											
Athens	20C/68F	Madrid	18C/64F	Austria	0.56	Luxembourg	0.46	Austria	15.62 Sch/£	Italy	2,312 Lire/£
Amsterdam	15C/59F	Oslo	6F/43F	Belgium	0.56	Netherlands	0.56	Belgium	45.85 BFr/£	Netherlands	2.50 Gld/£
Berlin	13C/55F	Paris	12C/54F	Eire	0.58	Norway	0.75	Denmark	8.66 K/£	Norway	9.66 NKr/£
Brussels	13C/55F	Rome	21C/70F	France	0.54	Portugal	0.47	Eire	0.94 Punt/£	Portugal	230 Es/£
Dublin	12C/54F	Stockholm	10C/50F	Germany	0.50	Spain	0.48	France	7.52 F/£	Spain	185 Pta/£
Lisbon	19C/66F	Vienna	19C/66F	Greece	0.43	Sweden	0.65	Germany	2.23 DM/£	Sweden	10.05 SKr/£
Luxembourg	14C/57F	Zurich	13C/55F	Italy	0.59	Switzerland	0.66	Greece	358 D/£	Switzerland	1.80 SFr/£

Is there risk of objection?

Q Some time ago you said there was a possibility of the premises of coach and bus operators being subject to objection on environmental grounds for O-licence purposes. Is that risk still with us, or has it gone away? We are considering buying some new premises but wonder whether this is a factor we should take in to account in assessing the cost and the suitability.

ML, Liverpool

a It was the change to continuous licensing that raised the question of whether PSV operators should perhaps be subject to the same rules that apply to operating centres for HGVs. As you know, continuous licensing started at the beginning of this year without any alteration to the PSV law in relation to environmental considerations. We have, therefore, crossed this particular fence.

Although there is, as far as I am aware, no immediate threat of this question rearing its head again in the immediate future, I do commend your caution about its possible effects.

It is an issue which, I think, will never wane. Indeed, environmental considerations seem set to come more and more to the fore. Increasing numbers of businesses are, in one way or another, affected by environmental regulation and I doubt that the coach and bus industry can remain immune for ever.

Relocation, especially if you are buying premises, is a long-term commitment and I do think you would be prudent to avoid locations which might be environmentally sensitive to residents in the immediate vicinity of the premises or the route of vehicle access to them.

Is this repetition necessary?

Q Do you honestly think that, in these days of widespread computerisation, it is really necessary to hand complete repetitive questions on a form to register or vary local services? Surely it should be possible to submit a computer-generated registration or variation?

AH, Cambs

a It is! At least, it is in your Traffic Area. Eastern, and at least one other Traffic Area have, for the last couple of years, been willing to accept 'plain paper' registrations. All that they ask is that the pagination should correspond with the PSV 350 or 355 and that space for the panel 'For Official Use Only' should be left empty, or reproduced, in the same location as on the official forms.

I understand it would be appreciated if you would submit a dummy 'plain paper' registration to the Traffic Area for approval before you start to use this process. As you recognise by your question, using a computer or word processor to make registrations will show a con-



Questions



Answers

siderable time saving. Operators elsewhere in the country reading this question may wish to consult with their local Traffic Area Offices to discover if this facility is available.

Dual-role for minibus

Q Can a 12-seater PSV minibus be used as a taxi?

ST, Lincolnshire

a I can think of no reason why such a vehicle, operated as a PSV and carrying a PSV disc, cannot be used as a taxi unless local authority by-laws render this impossible. (Some local authorities, I believe, specify particular sizes or types of vehicle, may impose minimum accessibility requirements and can even demand particular colour schemes).

If your question is aimed at discovering whether a 12-seater PSV can be used as a taxi outside of the PSV rules and without carrying a PSV disc, the answer is different because Section 1 of the Public Passenger Vehicles Act 1981 says a vehicle is being used as a PSV if it is

being so used, or if it has been so used and that use has not been permanently discontinued - and when a vehicle is being used as a PSV it has to display a disc (as required by Section 18 of the same Act).

This makes it impossible for a vehicle to be legally used 'on and off' as a PSV - whether alternating with use as a taxi or for personal travel. The Act does not define 'permanently discontinued' - but these are unambiguous words with a perfectly clear meaning.

Inspections too frequent?

Q Modern vehicles and their components are getting more and more reliable. How frequently do maintenance inspections need to be carried out? We inspect at 5,000km or four-weekly - whichever comes first - and frequently no faults are found which require rectification. Could we space inspections further apart?

FT, West Midlands

a There is no laid-down time or distance basis on which preventative maintenance inspections must be carried out, and I shirk from making any precise recommendations here, although I do hear what you say and agree that the inspection frequency that used to be necessary for Fords and Bedfords may well be not suited to the greater reliability of many contemporary vehicles. I would recommend that you read the DoT's *Guide to Maintaining Roadworthiness* which can be purchased from HMSO bookshops and possibly at Testing Stations and the Traffic Area Office.

It is up to you to decide the appropriate frequency having regard to the age and type of vehicle operated and the nature of the work done. To some extent I think you are on the right wavelength in considering how many faults you find when you do inspections. If a lot are found it means vehicles are being used in a state which could result in prohibitions, thus indicating the periods are too far apart.

If inspections frequently return a clean sheet this might suggest their period could be increased - but woe betide you if that creates problems! Never let up, however, on driver defect reporting and daily walk round checks. While these may not pick up every possible bit of wear and tear, they are a highly effective way of having a continuous preventative maintenance inspection and rectification system.

This will, in itself, reduce the possibility of prohibitions and also decrease the number of defects discovered, and rectification needed, when the full preventative maintenance inspection is done. If you do decide to alter the inspection periods, do not forget to notify your Traffic Area Office of the change. When you applied for your licence you will have stated what inspection periods will be followed. To alter them without notification could be considered to be a failure to honour a promise made to obtain the licence should any circumstances or events attract the attention of the traffic commissioner.



Questions on coach and bus operation should be sent to:
Marksman, c/o Coach and Bus Week, Wentworth House,
Wentworth Street,
Peterborough PE1 1DS
or fax 01733 467154

Marksman will answer more questions on 18 May 1996



Racing to the bar

LONG before Stagecoach days, back in the mid 1970s, an unlikely purchase by Southdown was a sizeable fleet of Ford 'R' series chassis with Duple coachwork.

One of these vehicles lives on in somewhat altered form to offer transport to "man and machine" courtesy of the drastically modified rear end. Conjuring up memories of the remark-

able manoeuvres of those ageless minis in the film, *The Italian Job*, this Ford has seemingly travelled beyond these shores with a less than sober contingent!

Seen here outside Cambus' depot in Cambridge, contrasting with the mid 1990s interpretation of what a coach should look like, you are left to wonder how any traffic cops could resist pulling over this one.



Master of the route or lost in London?

ADVERTISEMENTS on buses are, of course, a useful source of additional income but they can have their disadvantages. Apart from possibly spoiling the appearance of the operator's much-prized livery, the message can sometimes do little to reinforce the right image and indeed be counter-productive.

Take London Central's RM9 showbus seen recently on

the busy route 12 in the West End, looking very smart complete with between-deck side displays proclaiming: "A classic bus for a classic city - The London Routemaster".

Quite so, except the advertisement on the lower rear panel negated all this good work. Promoting a mapping system by the name of Routefinder it said: "Don't follow me, I'm lost, too!"

British Bus playbus arrives

THE Playbus, designed and sponsored by British Bus plc as a mobile Pre-Primary School for Atteridgeville College, Pretoria, arrived at the Portwood Hotel, Cape Town last Friday.

Dawson Williams, chairman of British Bus plc, presented the keys of the bus to Sez Motau, the college chairman. The bus is

fully equipped as a mobile classroom and will provide facilities on a daily basis with qualified teachers as well as health advisers (CBW, 30 March).

This will enable the South African township children to be stimulated on an educational level as well as benefiting from health services.



Solwador Cuatuno

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DENNIS JAVELIN 240	Algarve II	53 recliners	from £131,533
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93 (L)	DENNIS JAVELIN	Berkhof 10m	32 seats, toilet, servery
93 (K)	DENNIS JAVELIN	Duple 320	53 seats, power door
93 (K)	SCANIA K93	Plaxton 3500	51 seats, toilet, power door
92 (PP)	DAF MB230	Algarve 3.5	49 seats, toilet, power door
90 (PP)	MERCEDES 0303	Charisma	49 seats, toilet, power door
89 (F)	VOLVO B10M	Algarve	49 seats, toilet, power door
85 (C)	LEYLAND TIGER	Plaxton 3500	49 seats, toilet, power door
85 (B)	LEYLAND TIGER	Caribbean	48 seats, toilet, power door
85 (B)	LEYLAND TIGER	Duple Laser	53 seats, power door
84 (A)	LEY. R. TIGER	Doyen	46 seats, toilet, double glazed
84 (A)	DAF SB	Calypso	53 seats, power door
84 (A)	BEDFORD YNT	Contour	53 seats, power door
83 (Y)	LEYLAND TIGER	Duple Laser	51 seats, power door
82 (X)	FORD R1114	Plaxton	53 seats, power door
82 (X)	MAN	SR 280	47 seats, toilet, power door
77 (R)	BRISTOL LH	Plaxton	39 seats, power door

MINI BUS SELECTION

92 (K)	TOYOTA	Optimo II	21 seats, power door
91 (J)	TOYOTA	Optimo II	18 seats, power door
91 (H)	TOYOTA	Optimo II	21 seats, power door
90 (G)	TOYOTA	Optimo	18 seats, power door
89 (G)	MERCEDES 814D	North West	29 seats, power door
89 (F)	MERCEDES 811D	Made to Measure	22 seats, Bristol Dome
89 (F)	MERCEDES 507D	Reeve Burgess	16 seats
88 (F)	VW LT 55	Optare City Pacer	23 seats, power door
87 (E)	FORD	Transit	15 seats

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The year quoted denotes the date of first registration, not necessarily the year of manufacture.

LETTER OF THE WEEK



We expected some thanks

From Graham Stevenson

Your editorial (*CBW*, 13 April) accuses the T&G of "scaremongering" over coach safety. Yet, in your supplement *Transit* of the same week you carry an article reporting a 31 per cent rise in coach and bus prohibition notices over the last five years, illustrating the very real problem of safety in the industry.

Time and time again the police and the Vehicle Inspectorate have uncovered disturbing evidence of coaches that are potential death traps and drivers who have been on the road many hours beyond their legal limits. Is *Coach and Bus Week* seriously arguing that members of the public who are spending their hard-earned money on coach tickets should not be told the facts as they are?

Whenever anyone dares to raise the issue of coach safety, we see a knee-jerk reaction from the industry, desperately trying to deny the problem exists. They don't like the message, so they try to shoot the messenger.

The T&G made very clear both in its press release and in our advice leaflet to passengers that travelling by coach is generally safer than travelling by car, and that the problem lies with a small number of 'cowboy' operators who routinely break the law.

We would have thought that more reputable operators would have thanked us for

highlighting the unfair competition they face, and for advising potential passengers to travel with operators with a good safety record and decent wages and conditions for their drivers. Instead they created a storm in a teacup, giving our campaign far more publicity than it would have received otherwise.

National Express was prominent among operators in condemning the T&G's campaign, boasting that safety was of paramount importance to them. A few days later the *Western Daily Press* revealed how low pay among coach drivers — sometimes as little as £2 an hour — was putting the lives of passengers at risk. Their investigation uncovered cases of drivers clocking off after a day's work with one operator only to clock on with another, just to try to earn a living wage.

Yet National Express, which contracts other operators to drive its routes, absolved itself of all responsibility for such low wages. Their company spokesman told the newspaper that the wages its contractors paid drivers on their routes were nothing to do with them. Is this the attitude of a responsible operator concerned about the safety of its passengers? Or is this a case of an operator with its head firmly buried in the sand?

Finally, your editorial suggests that the T&G should have told coach passengers about the Vehicle Inspectorate's 'hotline' ser-

vice. This would hardly have been worthwhile, since this service is so far no more than a proposal and probably a long way from becoming a reality. Perhaps *Coach and Bus Week* ought to check its facts before offering the T&G advice on how we should be doing our job.

Graham Stevenson
National Secretary
Passenger Services
TGWU Central Office
London SW1

Write to: The Editor
Coach and Bus Week
EMAP Automotive Publishing
Wentworth House
Wentworth Street
Peterborough PE1 1DS
or fax 01733 467154



The editor is always pleased to receive letters for publication and, if requested, will publish these anonymously, but all letters should include the author's full name (ie first name and surname), address and telephone number



Letter of the week wins a
Corgi Classics model bus

IT is not child's play

From David Lynch

I read with interest, or should I say horror, (*CBW*, 30 March) your comment piece suggesting that computer information systems within the industry could be treated as child's play. Even more horrifying was the suggestion that a £750 machine could be used effectively by coach and bus companies to run their businesses, and, more to the point, I would like to know where a machine could be acquired for this money which would do all the suggested jobs and include software and printer.

It is much easier to talk about information than it is to say what you are talking about. It is commonly known that organisations must constantly change and adapt to their business environment to survive, making a strategic plan vital. It has become the norm, not only in the coach and bus industry, but in industry as a whole, that computer information systems are a vital and essential tool in supporting the competitive strategy of any organisation.

Therefore, a half-baked token gesture into a computer system will prove as useful to a company as setting off on a journey with no brakes. IT is a serious business and must not be taken as lightly, for, if used properly, it can

prove to be as beneficial as any top driver. In the fierce world of competition, knowing what's going on in a business minute in minute out, being able to predict trends and make decisions at the right time are critical. Therefore, computerisation of a business is something which cannot be taken on the advice of children. For it to work efficaciously, efficiently, and effectively, employing experts who know the business inside out and can tailor a system to the needs of a business is a far more sensible way forward.

There are also the questions in terms of maintenance, support and training, and the future which can only be truly advised upon by people who are involved in and dealing with a specific industry. The best business software applications packages are those that look simple, are quick to learn and actually help make the job easier. This requires complex design and attention to detail which can only come from experts who have involved themselves and the end users in the design and development of the products. In short, good timely information is king, and the best way to take advantage of this most powerful media is IT and the advice and service of experts.

David Lynch
General manager
Meridian Information Systems
Manchester

However 'horrific' you may find the purchase of a computer for £750, the second-hand PC marketplace is currently flooded with 386 and even 486 PCs at this price level and lower. We specifically did not include the cost of software, though few computers sold in the last 10 years have left the shop without pre-installed word processor, spreadsheet and database.

Of course, we agree that the top-quality option is one of running expensive, dedicated software on 100 MHz, networked machines, installed by a specialist firm with 24-hour on-line support and two weeks' training for the staff but that's out of the question for small operations. — Ed

We'll be back...

From Greg Llewellyn

Thank you for the Corgi model. I am sure we will be using our pseudonyms Dot Groy (good try) and Lobo Fudall (load of bull) again when we agree or disagree with some of your other contributions.

Greg Llewellyn (no anagram)
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Why did Henlys and Mark Barton joined 25 U

Cracking

VOLVO and Henlys' takeover of Canadian body-builder Prevost surprised the market last year. The structure of the deal, with Volvo taking 51 per cent and Henlys, Plaxton parent, 49 per cent, and the location of Prevost acted as five-star rocket fuel to the industry rumour machine.

The rumours were many and various, but all were fed by a basic ignorance. What sort of company was Prevost and why had Volvo and Henlys bought it? CBW's recent study trip to Canada presented a golden opportunity for UK operators to find out answers to those important questions.

Prevost's roots go back to 1924, when furniture maker Eugene Prevost was commissioned to make and mount a wooden bus body on a Reo truck chassis at his small factory in Sainte Claire, Quebec Province. The company continued to make church pews and school desks alongside buses right up until 1955 but, in the last 40 years, has focused purely on coachbuilding. And in the last 10 years has distanced itself from its US competitors through innovative design and a reputation for quality.

Today Prevost is still based in Sainte Claire, but in a modern purpose-built factory employing over 1,000 local workers. The old factory, much expanded and altered beyond recognition, is still there and responsible for turning out component assemblies and some bus frames - Prevost makes about 60 per cent of the content of its coaches - which are trucked to the new site to be built into completed vehicles.

The new factory is organised as a series of work stations or bays rather than a conventional production line. Vehicles in various stages of completion are moved between stations by giant though simple transporters of Prevost's own design, which travel on tracks sunk into the floor. All parts are racked up on special trolleys by pickers and wheeled through to production bays when needed.

Prevost claims the system ensures better build quality. It also allows motorhome shells which need little or no interior work to bypass some stations, avoiding bottlenecks and speeding up production.

From jig to its first test run, each coach takes a month to build. Currently the factory is working at capacity turning out 15 vehicles a week.

All sales are direct, through two sales offices in Canada and five in the US. Part exchanges are rarely taken in - a reflection of the strength of the North American used market. Our group's factory guide told us that, just before our visit, one 1992 coach which sold new for CN\$340,000 (around £170,000) was snapped up for CN\$315,000. Most never reach the open market, but are sold privately between operators.

Prevost's product range is what sets it apart from other North American coachbuilders and yet Le Mirage XL, the traditional mainstay of its product range, is a typically US production - 40 or 45 ft of strongly-built motor coach clad in ribbed stainless steel.



Prevost's range sets it apart from other North American coachbuilders

**Will Volvo buy Canadian bodybuilder Prevost?
UK operators on CBW's latest study tour to find out**

a profitable nut

Designed primarily for what the Americans call line work or inter urban services, it also forms the basis of the bare bus shells which Prevost sells to converters to transform into incredibly luxurious motor homes, costing around one million Canadian dollars or £500,000 apiece. Prevost dominates this highly-profitable market with an 80 per cent share.

Le Mirage was the mainstay of its product range until in 1985 Prevost surprised the US market by launching the H5-60 - a 76-passenger articulated coach with five axles and, shock, horror, no ribbed steel cladding on the body. Exhaustive testing followed and it was not until mid-1990 that a 40 ft version - the H3-40 - was launched and then a tri-axle 45 ft version dubbed the H3-45.

Although shocked, the market recovered its composure and Prevost's sales growth since then has been impressive. North American manufacturers guard their information closely, but Prevost expects to sell nearly 400 coaches this year to take around 17 per cent of the market.

In 1993, it sold just over 250 to take 11 per cent of the market. When bus shells are included, the growth curve looks even better - up from around 320 units and 20 per cent in 1993 to nearly 700 units and over 28 per cent this year.

Prevost's plans extend to producing 1,000 vehicles a year by the year 2,000. To hit that target and to ensure growth beyond it, Prevost, spurred on by the decision of the

Province of Quebec to sell its 37.5 per cent shareholding in the business, turned to the mighty Volvo. Prevost's need for a partner to enable it to compete in a world dominated by mega-players is a familiar story. But what do Volvo and Henlys get out of the deal?

First and foremost they have bought profit. Prevost is very profitable. The latest Henlys' accounts show that Prevost made pre-tax profits of nearly £6.3 million on turnover of £63.5 million in the seven months following the acquisition.

But perhaps more importantly, the deal brings a number of strategic advantages to both manufacturer and body-builder.

Virtually all Prevosts are fitted with Detroit Diesels and Allison gearboxes. Volvo sees scope to capitalise on the Euro appeal of the H-series and offer its own drive trains to American operators not exactly spoiled for choice.

North America is one the biggest and most attractive markets in the world for European coach and truck makers. Historically it has also proved to be one of the most difficult to crack. Included in the Prevost deal is a ready-made, Continent-wide sales and after-sales network that includes 150 parts and service centres.

Henlys' Plaxton subsidiary has a 25-year association with Volvo and is its biggest European body supplier. Selling 49 per cent of its stake in the company to Plaxton's par-



North America is one of the biggest and most attractive markets in the world for European coach and truck makers. Historically it has also proved to be one of the most difficult to crack



The 45ft tri-axle H3-45 followed a 76-passenger artic which surprised the market in the mid-1980s

ent Henlys, gives Volvo access to a major bodybuilder's expertise. It probably anticipates the growing technical interdependence between manufacturers of running units and bodies, driven both by legislation and the need to reduce cost.

Although more European in looks, the Prevost product is unmistakably American with features driven by the traditional demands of the American market. The windscreen is in 4 pieces, air-conditioning blows up from

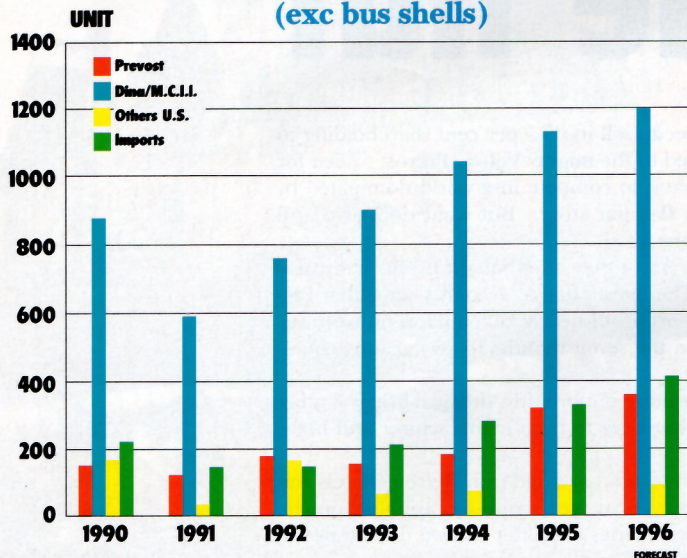
vents at the bottom of the windows, the door swings in and the standard engine is a massive 400bhp Detroit diesel. The H series has proved there is a market for an American coach with elements of European styling. It is no secret that Plaxton and Volvo are currently developing a European designed vehicle with the necessary features to complement the H series in the North American market.

Watch this space.

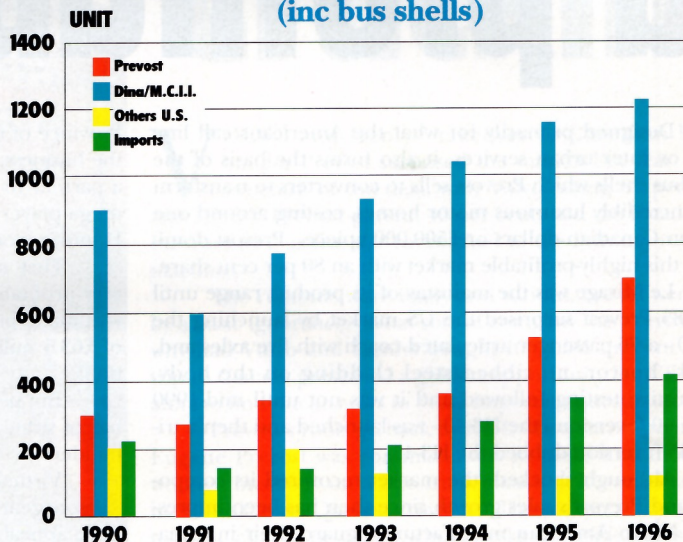
CBW

The CBW Canadian study tour was sponsored by Volvo and Plaxton

**North American Coach Market
(exc bus shells)**



**Total North American Coach Market
(inc bus shells)**



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S E C O N D T O N O N E

SJ SUPERDEAL



Scania Elite K113 Plaxton Paramount 3500

1992, 7 speed manual GR801 comfort shift gearbox, ABS, road speed governor, variable top speed limiter, exhaust brake, kneel facility, ferry lift, autolube, electric retarder, Webasto heating, inswinging entrance door. Central continental door, centre toilet, half rear emergency door, 3 roof vents, forced air ventilation, aircraft lockers, crew compartment, grey moquette, 49 reclining seats, centre gangway carpet, double glazed, side curtains, rear curtains, side blinds, aluminium wheels, Blaupunkt radio / PA system.
MOT 13.09.96

SJ SUPERDEAL



Volvo B10M MKIII Van Hool Alizee

1990, ZF 6 speed S690 manual gearbox, Telma Retarder, autolube, ferry lift, road speed governor, variable top speed limiter, exhaust brake, Webasto heating, plug front entrance door, centre continental door, half rear emergency door, centre toilet / servery, crew compartment, 3 roof vents, forced air ventilation, Ishringhausen drivers seat, courier seat, 49 reclining seats, brown moquette, double glazed, side blinds, rear curtains, radiomobile radio / PA system.
MOT 01.10.96

SJ SUPERDEAL



Scania K112 Plaxton 4000

1985, 72 reclining seats, courier seat, toilet, drinks.
MOT 28.01.97

SJ SUPERDEAL

Leyland Tiger Plaxton 3500

1984, 6 speed ZF gearbox, 49 reclining seats, O/S/R sunken toilet, O/S/R continental door, drinks, fridge, radio, PA
M.O.T. 06.96

SJ SUPERDEAL

Volvo B10M Mk II Van Hool Alizee

1989, 273 BHP, ZF 6 speed S690 manual gearbox, Telma retarder, exhaust brake, autolube, road speed governor, variable top speed limiter, ferry lift, plug entrance door, half rear emergency exit, double glazed side windows with blinds, rear screen curtains, Ishringhausen drivers seat, courier seat, 53 reclining seats, brown moquette, radiomobile radio / PA system, 3 roof air vents, forced air ventilation. Choice of 7 blue moquette.
Variable MOTs

SJ SUPERDEAL

Volvo B10M Mk III Van Hool Alizee

1991, 273 BHP, ZF HP5000 automatic gearbox, internal retarder, ABS, road speed governor, variable top speed limiter, autolube, ferry lift, kneel facility, plug entrance door, centre continental door, half rear emergency exit, double glazed side windows with blinds, rear screen curtains, Ishringhausen drivers seat, courier seat, crew compartment, 49 reclining seats, **lap belts**, brown/orange moquette, mid section servery / fridge, toilet, radiomobile radio / PA system, 2 roof air vents, forced air ventilation. Choice of 2 brown / orange.
Variable MOTs

SJ SUPERDEAL



DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee

1989, 49 seats, Webasto, drivers bunk, double glazing, foot rests, seat back nets, water boiler, fridge, curtains, carpets, wired for TV and video, sunken centre toilet, continental door.
MOT 09.12.96

SJ SUPERDEAL



Setra Tornado 215 HD

1992, MAN engine, ZF 7 speed gearbox, Voith retarder, 49 reclining seats & courier seat, sunken centre toilet with continental door, Webasto heating, Surtrak air conditioning, servery unit with water boiler, front mounted fridge, radio / PA / cassette system, 2 TV monitors and video, drivers bunk, drivers door with wardrobe and central locking.
MOT 06.12.96

SJ SUPERDEAL

Leyland Tiger 260 Duple 340

1987, 48 reclining seats, O/S/R/ sunken toilet, O/S/R continental door, TV / video, courier seat, blue stripe moquette, exterior 2 tone metallic grey.
M.O.T. 22.03.97

SJ SUPERDEAL

Volvo B10M Jonckheere P90

1983, 58 reclining seats plus courier, TV / video.
M.O.T. 22.03.97

SJ SUPERDEAL



Leyland Tiger L10

1989, Alexander service bus bodies, Cummins L10 ZF automatic, 55 seats & 24 standees, painted white.
MOT 30.08.96

SJ UPDATE

New Neoplan Deals

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NEOPLAN

U.K. CONCESSIONAIRE



Optare rocked the bus industry by unveiling a low-floor bus with up to 48 seats for £85,000. And in a Leeds road test Mike Morgan found its performance was as good as its looks

WHEN Optare's sparkling new Excel low-floor arrived at the NEC for the Coach & Bus 95 show, the Leeds-based manufacturer exploded the myth that low-floor buses had to be expensive.

In one vehicle Optare has settled the uncertainty which has troubled operators ever since the great low-floor debate bubbled up more than two years earlier. Improved access is commendable but, when linked to greater complexity, higher capital cost and reduced passenger capacity, the equation doesn't always add up.

In an industry where costs are being driven down it is significant that the vast majority of low-floor buses, such as those in London, Manchester and Liverpool, have been partly funded by public money. New vehicles designed with a one-step entrance have come with a 15 to 20 per cent premium - until now.

The one-step Optare is an answer to the operator's dilemma. In a range of vehicles costing from £78,000 for a 9.6-metre bus to £85,000 for an 11.5 metre it tackles the three low-floor disadvantages head on. By taking a pragmatic approach Optare has avoided complexity. For the price of a conventional bus you can have low-floor. And, by opting for 2.5-metre width and integral construction, the space available for passengers makes the Excel appear Tardis-like.

Optare has a reputation for innovation through design and technology, so for some the ability to produce a bus which looked good while keeping a cap on price was a contradiction. So how did they do that?

The starting point for managing director, Russell Richardson, and his team was a simple question. Why does a low-floor bus have to cost more? Their answer is here for everyone to see.

Building on experience gained with its highly-successful MetroRider midibus — demand for which is at an all-time high as operators appreciate the value of a purpose-built vehicle when compared with a van conversion — the Excel uses the same type of welded-steel integral construction. Taking the company's mould-breaking Delta single-deck and Spectra double-deck as starting points, the Excel has class-beating entrance and high-quality interior/exterior finish with new systems for low maintenance.

Where some low-floor designs rely on a tortuous driveline and sophisticated controls of suspension and wheelchair ramps, the Excel has conventional 'T' drive power/transmission arrangement. Although conceived with flat floor and wide throat, a wheelchair ramp is considered unnecessary. This is an accessible bus for all and if the suspension is lowered the entrance drops obligingly to pavement height. So why complicate the issue?

Where the Excel truly excels is in its common-sense engineering. There's a wisdom on display which could be all too easily missed in the hustle and bustle of the NEC



Optare Excel: an integral accessible bus for all at

Driving belie

show where the 10-metre prototype was on display.

But since then it has clocked-up 9,500 miles on trips around the country to show potential buyers its finer qualities and has been tested in service by Ipswich Buses, while the first 11.5-metre Excel has survived a no-holds-barred examination at the Leyland test centre.

Next on the gruelling schedule before last week's launch of the first production vehicles was a CBW road test.

The test was geared to test the prototype in simulated



cost which turns low-floor thinking on its head

ing is vining

service on a cross-city route starting in the housing estate adjacent to Optare's Crossgates factory and following the track of a mix of Leeds City Link and West Riding services to take in the new city centre bus station before heading for neighbouring Bradford and its interchange.

Three round trips put 70 miles on the clock and confirmed the Excel's ability to perform in the urban jungle.

Although a pre-production model, there was barely a squeak or rattle and modifications deemed necessary for

the production line need a trained eye to identify. For the record these include floor trap over the prop shaft and revised arrangement of dials in the unusual, yet highly effective half-moon instrument panel.

Starting with a clean sheet gives designers of an integral vehicle a glorious opportunity to innovate. But there's little commercial virtue in trying out silly ideas and Optare needs to be congratulated for keeping its feet firmly on the ground.

For the passenger there's the 320mm floor height dropping to 230mm at the touch of a button, giving an inviting walk-in entrance. Asymmetric door sizes make for a wider door at the front maximising gangway access so that push-chairs or wheelchairs can turn easily through the 900mm gap between front wheelarches.

The floor remains flat over the MAN-sourced front axle and the waist rail to floor dimension ensures easy vision for all seated passengers. Heating, electrical and air systems are in the roof and intrusion forced by chassis components is minimal.

Two 200mm steps lift the passenger into the rear of the saloon, which is also flat and uncluttered. By fitting seats sideways over the wheel boxes there are no awkward footstools. The rear seats are reached without any further steps.

The test bus had optional double-glazing and 34 very appealing Vogel seats - two of its three optional extras which, together with electronic destination gear, lift the asking price above the basic £80,000. Three tip-up seats on the nearside were fitted.

Up to 40 seats could be accommodated but wheelchair access would be compromised by seating passengers over the front wheelarches.

Given that passengers' needs should come first in any bus design, the Excel hits its target admirably. Noise levels remain on a par with most luxury coaches and the heating/ventilation system works a treat.

Our test was on one of those less-desirable April days in Leeds when the rain lashes down and the wind whistles in from the east. Doubtless the double-glazing played a valuable part but the thermostatically-controlled heating system, which draws fresh air into the rear roof pod before blowing the warm/cold air through interior cove-ducts, kept the saloon warm with air directed across the roof and down the windows, while the cab area has separate demister for screen, cab and side window.

Should further ventilation be required there are two hopper windows on either side of the saloon.

We put ride comfort through a severe test. For much of the route the roads were in an appalling state of repair and, because the wheelbase is the only variable between the four vehicle lengths available, the 10-metre ride could be expected to be choppy - just 4655mm between the axles; 2673mm at the front and 2728mm at the rear.

It would be inaccurate to suggest that the Excel smoothed-out all the bumps — the roads were too bad. However, the bus remained stable under all conditions and there were no tremors transmitted through the steering wheel or seat.

The Excel driver's lot is a very happy one. Adjustable steering column, as used in Iveco's EuroCargo, puts your driver in control and the spacious cab provided a comfortable environment. All it lacks is a coat peg and somewhere to slot the running board.

Switches are grouped to the left and there's a near perfect relationship between suspension lower, door control, handbrake and Allison's latest



Unusual: half-moon shape dash



ROAD TEST



Inviting entrance for passengers...



...and attractive to bus engineers...



...whichever way you are looking at it

touch-control gearchange. Lowering or raising the front suspension takes eight seconds and the whole process from pulling on the handbrake and opening the door takes 12 seconds. When moving away from the bus stop the suspension raises automatically.

It's amazing how relaxing bus control can be when the cab is right. Just touch the drive button on the keypad and you have instant power in your right foot.

It's a small 160 bhp engine at the back, yet through the seamless-gearchanging box, it pushes the Excel forward with commendable ease. Hills? No problem.

Added value in the Allison 'World Series' gearbox is the integral retarder which smoothed out the braking without being intrusive. However, gearbox down changes can give an unwelcome jerk if you take your foot off the brake and accelerate at the point where its electronic brain determines a lower ratio. When speed is held in a low gear just at the point where it would otherwise change up you can be surprised by a sudden upchange. Otherwise it is very impressive.

Equally impressive is Optare's packaging of this

powertrain.

Mounted on a subframe for last-minute assembly, the whole package can also be detached for maintenance within 90 minutes. That's four horizontal bolts and four vertical bolts together with self-sealing connectors for all pipes and the engine/gearbox assembly drops on to a trolley. So easy and so obvious that you marvel that nobody else has done it before.

There are other thoughtful tricks in the Excel repertoire. The aluminium side panels do not form part of the structure so they have quick-release locks for swift maintenance. A similar design is used on the interior cove panels.

A host of other good ideas justify Optare's claim that the Excel offers a 'catalogue of innovation'. It deserves a close look and Optare offers full after-sales support through its UniTec division.

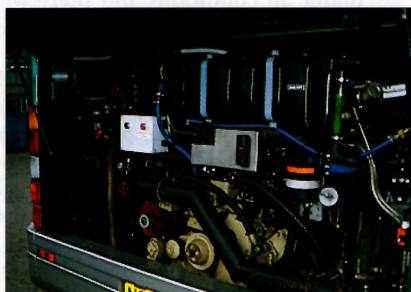
Taking the wheel of the new bus is a rewarding experience suggesting that Excel is a very appropriate choice of model name. However, it scores on a much more fundamental point. With the Excel available operators need a very good reason for not buying low-floor.



SPECIFICATION

Vehicle:	Optare Excel
Body:	10-metre, 34 seats/22 standees
Price:	£80,000
Engine:	turbo-charged six-cylinder Cummins B series
Power:	160 bhp (118 kW) @ 2,500 rpm
Torque:	406 Lbf ft (550 Nm) @ 1,550 rpm
Gearbox:	Allison B300R four-speed automatic
Steering:	ZF 8098 power assisted - tilt adjustable column
Brakes:	dual-circuit air system, separate system for each axle, automatic 'S' cam adjusters front - drums rear - drums handbrake - spring release
Retarder:	integral
Suspension:	front - full air system with kneeling rear - full air system with leading taper leaf springs
Front axle:	MAN drop-centre low-floor V9-65L-03

Drive axle:	Rockwell R130.E single reduction hypoid - ratio 5.38:1
Tyres:	255/70R x 22.5



Wide access to compact power

DIMENSIONS

Length:	10 metres
Width:	2.5 metres
Height:	3 metres
Wheelbase:	4.655 metres
Unladen weight:	8,560 kg
GVW:	15,000 kg

PERFORMANCE

Acceleration:	0-30 mph - 10 secs 0-50 mph - 28 secs
Fuel economy:	test consumption - 8.75 mpg total distance - 70 miles fuel used - 8 gallons
Noise levels at 40 mph:	cab - 72 dB(A) saloon centre - 70 dB(A) saloon rear - 72 dB(A)

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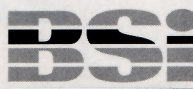
Company

Address

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Telephone

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BSI Quality Assurance
PO Box 375
Milton Keynes MK14 6LL
Facsimile: 01908 228715

LDV's revised minibus range was launched in a blaze of publicity. Noel Millier examines the benefits for operators



Despite changes engine and transmission options remain as before

And now for something not completely different

LDV Chief Executive Allan Amey may have described the new Pilot and Convoy as "the single most important event for the company since LDV was established in April 1993" (*CBW*, 27 April) but, if anyone expected a brand new range of vans suitable for conversion into minibuses, they will be disappointed. However, anyone satisfied with the proven qualities of the 400 series should be happy as the range retains much of the old but with significant improvements in quality, style and refinement.

The Pilot replaces the 200 and the Convoy the 400. A major aim in the new range particularly significant to coach and bus operators has been to eliminate causes of 'boom and harshness' in the vehicle driveline. On the Convoy model modifications have been made to cut air cleaner induction noise, reduce engine vibration by improving engine mountings, reduce heater air intake noise, and 'tune out' resonance by fitting a new mass damper to the prop-shaft centre bearing. Throughout the body structure sound-deadening acoustic insulation is used.

Despite all these changes the engine and transmission options remain as before, with the 1,900 cc diesel Pilot standard and the Convoy with 2.5-litre naturally-aspirated or turbocharged diesels available. A 3.5-litre petrol V8 Convoy is also on offer but is specifically intended for high-performance roles where fuel economy is not of prime importance. Factory-fitted rear air suspension is an option on Convoy models.

LDV is probably market leader in factory-produced minibuses, with the 400 series well established in the schools sector in particular. To maintain its position it has replaced the 200 series 12-seat bus with a new wide body short-wheelbase Convoy 13 seater, although a narrow Pilot 12 seater is offered through the LDV Special Vehicle Order (SVO) facility. The most popular LDV 12-seater minibus, Convoy, now comes with the high roof and a four-speaker stereo system as standard. All factory-produced LDV minibuses now come with fully-tested three-point 'generation' seatbelts as standard. All facto-

ry-produced minibuses are built to PSV certification standards. Most popular base vehicles for converters will be the Convoy Hi-Loader 3.2-metre wheelbase van, which comes in 3.1 or 3.5-tonne versions. An extra-long-wheelbase chassis cab version is also available for bespoke coachwork.

Other improvements include:

- Bonnet redesign has allowed a wider engine aperture to make routine maintenance easier.
- Bodyside now uses zinc-coated steel throughout and has allowed LDV to introduce a new six-year perforation and a two-year corrosion warranty across both ranges.
- The new bonnet panel is plastic.
- Driver visibility has been improved by fitting larger and more aerodynamic door windows with adjustable and styled new side mirrors.
- Stronger and more practical security door locks.
- An asymmetric window style as part of the new model's trademark.
- Stiffness and strength of the doors has been increased.
- High-roof Convoy models feature a more aerodynamic front end profile to match the bonnet line.
- New instrument panel incorporating a top mat for stowing sunglasses, pens, coins and cans.
- Smaller steering wheel more suitable for power steering.
- New graphics have been designed for the new instrument binnacle, which has fewer parts to reduce creaks and rattles.
- Steering column control stalks are based on those fitted to the Rover 800 car range.
- An improved heating and demisting system and new headrests on the Isringhausen cab seats, new roof linings, door trims, interior lighting and even sun visors complete the changes.

Pricing 'remains competitive' and LDV says improvement in product quality and the level of equipment is proportionately greater than the increase, so value for money is better than before. Its new models have been designed to cost less to service and repair. For example, LDV has avoided switching to bonded windscreens because of the downtime associated with their replacement. The only new service tool required for the new models is one designed to be used when working on the new security lock system.

LDV is also combining all of its after-sales marketing activities under the name VANcare. The roadside assistance scheme Leyland DAfaid is renamed VANaid and is a key part of the LDV 100,000-mile two-year warranty scheme. LDV finance also offers a full range of schemes including full contract maintenance packages.



Smaller wheel more suitable for power steering

Hughes DAF



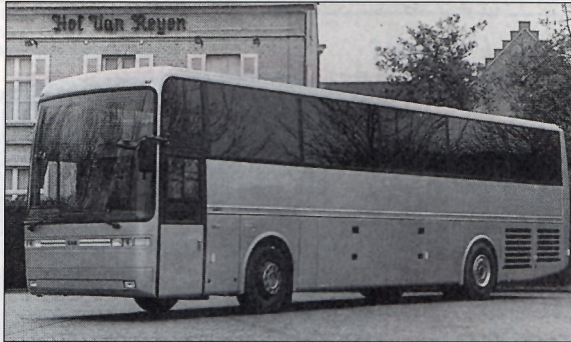
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PLAXTON



Buses are our business.

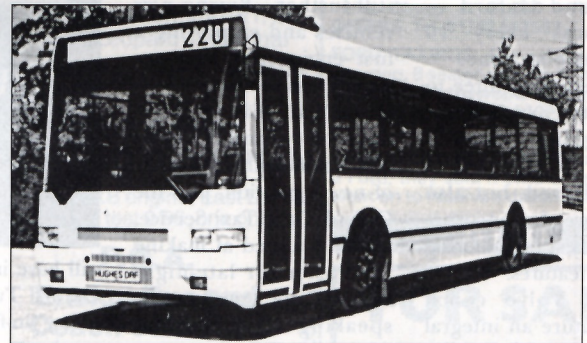


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BERKHOF

Oxford Tube's £1 million boost

Seven new 53-seater Volvos update 23-strong express service

by Mike Morgan

ONE million pounds worth of new luxury coaches are now in service on Thames Transit's 24-hour Oxford Tube express coach link between London and Oxford.

The seven Berkhof-bodied 51-seat coaches update the current 23-strong Oxford Tube fleet.

Vehicles on the ultra-high-frequency express link between London and Oxford — which runs every 10 minutes at busy times — are replaced every three to four years, ensuring not only ongoing improvements in the standard of service offered, but also making sure they incorporate the latest engineering and safety features.

The Volvo coach chassis feature an integral brake retarder plus anti-lock brake system.

Thames Transit deputy md Keith McNally said: 'Thames Transit is

committed to providing a top-quality service to customers. We already provide one of the most frequent 24-hour inter-city express coach services in Europe and we know our customers want an all-round quality service.

'We continually monitor the service and look for ways to improve it still further. Buying new vehicles and employing a first-engineering team are part of that process.

'Last year we introduced a voluntary speed restriction well in advance of new legislation, plus the Oxford Tube Taxi Service, which is aimed at making life easier for late-night Oxford Tube travellers. By speaking to the driver when boarding, customers can ask for a taxi to be called ready to collect them when they arrive in Oxford.

'Another feature we



will have introduced is the Oxford Tube update — a glossy 'in-flight'-style information leaflet for customers which contains useful information about what is going on entertainment-wise in Oxford and

London. All these factors put together ensure the Oxford Tube service is of the highest possible quality.

'Over one million passengers a year use the service and that figure continues to increase and

we believe we have a winning formula.

'New coaches ensure that coach travel continues to be an attractive alternative to other forms of transport and at a competitive price.'

CAETANO AND SETRA

Optimo joins Setra Special

STEVE Hedley (right) of West Kingsdown Coach Hire, Sevenoaks is seen with Salvador Caetano (UK) general sales manager Alistair Wilson at the recent hand-over of a Toyota Optimo III, 21-seater Luxury Coach.

The comprehensive coachwork included 21 reclining seats, courier seat, tinted side windows with full draw curtains, power entrance door, Blaupunkt stereo

radio/pa/cassette and full soft trim with centre gangway carpet. A speed limiter was also specified.

The vehicle was finished in West Kingsdown's distinctive two-tone metallic 'graffiti' blue livery and joins a further MAN-engined Setra 250 Special for the fleet. Fitted with air-conditioning, the Setra has 48 reclining seatbelted seats, toilet and two-monitor video.

CAETANO

Coaches stars of show

STAR Cars of Erdington, Birmingham has recently collected two Caetano coaches from Salvador Caetano (UK) Ltd. Its Toyota Optimo III is a 21-seat GL with the usual Caetano refinements, including 21 seats, courier seat, tinted side windows, Blaupunkt stereo equipment and full soft trim with centre gangway carpet.

An MAN 11.190-Algarve II, 8.5-metre, 35 seater also joins the fleet. The comprehensive coachwork features 35 reclining seats, courier seat, double-glazed and tinted side windows with full draw curtains, full height rear Continental door, Blaupunkt stereo radio/pa/cassette and full soft interior trim.



Classified

Tel: 01733 467147

Fax: 01733 467154



BEDFORD

1984 BEDFORD YNT, Plaxton Paramount 3200, 53 seats, tinted windows, power door, just tested to April 1997, good condition - buy now for this season before they are all gone! £14,500 + VAT. Tel. 01782 563563.

(62929/BE)

BEDFORD, D reg, YMPS, 35 recliners, aircraft lockers, tables, very clean and tidy, long MoT, £24,950 + VAT. Tel. 0121 558 0087.

(62538/BE)

BEDFORD 500, 53 seats, new test, taxed, good runner, ready to go, in daily use. £4,750 ovno. No VAT. Ring (Bedford) 01234 267840 or 0402 351515.

(62537/BE)

BEDFORD REEBUR 17 mini coach, 16 seats with seat belts, 1981, 2279cc diesel, PSV tested, good all round condition, £2,250 ono. Tel. 01206 230906.

(62869/BE)

BOVA

Due to new vehicle intake

BENNETTS SILVERLINE

Offer the following tour coaches for sale:

1994 (L) BOVA FUTURA FHD, 49 recliners + courier, double glazed, PA & video, hot drinks & fridge, WC, air conditioned, choice of 3.....£125,000 each

1994 (L) BOVA FUTURA CLUB, 53 recliners + courier, double glazed, PA, hot drinks, only one available.....£105,000

1990 (G) BOVA FUTURA FHD, 51 recliners + courier, double glazed, PA, hot drinks & fridge, WC, air conditioned, only one available.....£85,000

All the above vehicles have been owned, operated and maintained by us from new. Part exchange welcome, private plates & finance can be arranged

Please contact
Simon Weaver
01635 248423

(62726/BOV)

DAF

1986 DAF MB230 DUPL 340

53R seats & courier, continental door, toilet, TV, video, hot water boiler, tested March 1997, ready to drive away, part exchange considered

£38,000 + VAT

Tel: 0116 238 7783
0370 366 458

(62918/DAF)

DAF

1989 (F)
DAF SB 3000
VAN HOOL ALIZEE
49/53, wc, hot drinks,
wired for video,
MoT Feb '97.

1989 (G)
BOVA FUTURA FHD
49/53, wc, hot drinks,
finished in white,
MoT Jan '97.

*Very special price
for the pair!*

Robert Ryan
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01449 766323

(62940/DAF)

DAF Algarve 1984

49 seater with toilet,
MoT July
**MUST SELL,
OFFERS INVITED**
Tel: 01536 200500

(62912/DAF)

1985 DAF MB200 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500

Low driver, 53 reclining seats, Blaupunkt radio/pa, curtains, rear continental door, excellent condition throughout, very smart vehicle, taxed and tested.

£36,950 + VAT
Tel. 01992 572409

(62731/DAF)

DOUBLE DECKERS

1977 DAIMLER FLEETLINE

Gardner engine, power steering,
74 seats, MoT Oct '96.

£3,750 + VAT
P&O Lloyd, N. Wales
Tel. 01352 710682

(62879/DD)

DOUBLE DECKERS

W NORTH (PV) LTD

Tel. 01977 682415
Fax. 01977 681119

BRISTOL VRT3

1978-79-80, 74 seats,
ECW body, choice of 10.

BRISTOL LH

1978-79-80, ECW body,
43 seats, choice of 20.

All spares to fit Bristol VRT, LH,
Leyland Leopard - National

(62888/DD)

1984 A Reg LEYLAND OLYMPIAN

Gardner 6LXB engine, East Lancs,
76 seats, test 9/96, one only.

P.O.A.

Ensign Bus and
Coach Sales Ltd
Tel: 01708 631122
Fax: 01708 631086

(62799/DD)

1977 BRISTOL VR

74 seater,
MoT Oct/Nov 1997.
Choice of 2
Tel. 01452 720666
(Gloucester)

(62916/DD)

DENNIS

1991 J DENNIS JAVELIN Plaxton 3200

Low driver, 51 seats, Telma,
double glazed, curtains, toilet,
continental door, tv/video,
drinks machine, test July '96.

£66,000 + VAT
Tel. 01698 792145

(62866/DE)

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1986 DODGE SERVICE BUS

35 seater, semi-reclining coach seats,
71,000 miles, (113,000 km)
from new, 11 months PSV MoT,
11 months tax, Perkins turbo engine,
6 speed box, power doors,
ready to use

£7,250 ono
Tel: 01794 368569
(Hampshire)

(62956/DO)

FORD

1979 FORD R114 Duple Dominant II, 53
seats, tinted windows, above average
condition for year, MoT'd to September
1996. Cheap at £1,950 + VAT - NO
OFFERS. Tel. 01782 563563.

(62930/FO)

FORD TAXIBUS, 8 + wheelchair, also
Tourneo, 8 seater + 14, 15 & 16 available
now. Tel. Blythswood Motors on 0141
221 3165 or 0141 639 6107 evenings.

(62969/FO)

WHEN DARTLING COACHES advertised a
Ford, they sold it on the first call, but
went on to receive a dozen more.

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FOR SALE

1985 IVECO SALVADOR
CAETANO VIANNA

Taxed May 1996,
tested April 1997.

£7,000 ono - no VAT
Tel. 01526 342417

(62967/IVE)

1987 IVECO 49.10, Robin Hood, 19
seater service bus, MoT expired and
needs some attention to engine, only
£900 + VAT to clear. Tel. 01782 563563.

(62931/IVE)

LAG

1986 D LAG PANORAMIC

49 seats, Webasto, Telma, bunk,
2 x tvs, fridge, double glazed,
610,000k from new, very nice
condition

£45,000

P/X considered

Tel. 01268 783878
(Essex)

(62927/LAG)

LEYLAND

WANTED LEYLAND LEOPARDS FOR BREAKING

Any condition, cash waiting.

Call now!
01782 563944

(62913/LE)

Coach and Bus Week ending 4 May 1996

LEYLAND

LEYLAND LEOPARDS - X and Y reg, most with full or long tests, fitted with either bus or coach seats and recently painted.
Excellent condition. Choice of 5.

Priced from £4,000-£4,995 plus tyres and painting.

Contact Mick Stafford (Sheffield) 01909 562618

(62915/LE)

Paul Anderson
Managing Director
Anderson's Coaches
Castleford
West Yorkshire

Just a line to say that I placed an advertisement with Coach and Bus Week in your 23 March issue for my '81 Leyland Leopard, in excellent condition, but some might say over-priced at £15,000.

We had five calls over the following weekend, but the first caller visited on Saturday from Maidstone and bought the vehicle. We were looking for a secondhand Setra 215HD and found it in Coach and Bus classified the following week. Many thanks.

X Reg LEYLAND TIGERS, semi-auto, 11 metres, fitted 53 seats, Plaxton Viewmaster bodies.....
£14,000 each

W Reg LEYLAND NATIONAL 2, selection of one or two door bus and coach seated.....from **£12,000**

W Reg LEYLAND LEOPARD, fitted Duple Dominant 47-seater service bus body, semi-auto, power steering, very clean**£8,500**

All prices plus VAT

ENSIGN BUS AND COACH SALES LTD

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(62951/LE)

LEYLAND LEOPARD PLAXTON SUPREMES

Choice of 3 (1976-1979), Mk3 & 4 (all with Mk4 fronts). All 11 metre semis with dual purpose doors. All in good condition with recently retrimmed seats, long or new tests.

CLASSIC COACHES
Stanley, Co. Durham

Tel. 01207 282288

(62878/LE)

1989 (F) TIGER 290

L10 Cummins, ZF auto, Plaxton 3200, 53 recliners, double glazed, removable destination (Vultron), 2 very reliable vehicles, one for sale (your choice).

£53,000 + VAT

Tel. 01204 668112

Roger Jarvis

(62928/LE)

ROYAL TIGER DOYEN

June 1987, 49 seats, toilet, servery, video, bunk, semi-auto, vgc, all Doyen extras, reason for sale - new vehicle imminent.

MoT 6/96, pp.

£34,000

Tel. 01895 233987

(62794/LE)

1988

LEYLAND TIGER

Plaxton Paramount 3500

Cummins 10L, new 7-speed gearbox, 49 recliners plus courier, toilet, drinks, tinted double glazing, rear continental door, MoT July '96.

£56,750 + VAT

Tel. 01200 26269

(62908/LE)

1983 'Y' LEYLAND TIGER 245

Dominant IV Goldliner, 6 speed ZF gearbox, 50 reclining seats, curtains, power door, radio PA cassette, and wheeltrims, new clutch fitted 18 months ago and generally maintained regardless of cost, Ex-Warner Fairfax five years ago, beautiful example, MoT expires 10 Dec 1996

£13,750 + VAT ovno

or good quality Leopard/Tiger Express coach considered in part exchange

MACEWAN'S COACH SERVICES
DUMFRIES Tel: 01387 710357

(60899/LE)

LEYLAND TIGER GOLDLINER, large windows, 47 seats, toilet, ZF manual box, MoT March '97, private plates, very good condition, painted in your colour is required. Price **£12,500**. Tel: 01268 711770.

(62934/LE)

1979 LEYLAND LEOPARD, Plaxton Express, recent repaint and retrim, MoT Feb '97, **£7,500**. Morris, 01885 483219 (answerphone).

(62936/LE)

MERCEDES

MERCEDES 0303 JONCKHEERE

1983 pp, 49 recliners plus courier, rear toilet, servery, wired for tv and video, hot water boiler, sun blinds, carpeted, taxed and tested April '97, excellent mechanical condition.

£24,500 + VAT ono

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(62760/ME)

MERCEDES 410D

L registered 16 seater, one owner from new, 12 months test, luxury spec, school contracts, local private hire, very clean and tidy throughout

£16,500 + VAT

Tel: 0151 526 8888

(62876/ME)

MERCEDES

John Oakes of North Manchester Commercials

placed an advert in
Coach and Bus Week to sell
a Mercedes-Benz 709D.

*He received a great deal
of response before selling
the vehicle.*

MERCEDES COACHES, immediate 814L with 37 coach seats, 6 cyl engine, air suspension. Also 814 turbo, 33 coach seats, forced air, reading lights. Also 711 turbo, coachbuilt, 25 seats, luggage boot. Conversions in stock, also 711 turbo, 609, both with 24 luxury and large dropwell boot. Part exchange on all above welcome. **Tel. Blythwood Motors on 0141 221 3165 or 0141 639 6107 evenings.** (62970/ME)

MERCEDES: IMMEDIATE DELIVERY. New Merc 814L, 6 cylinder engine, coachbuilt, 37 seat luxury coach, power door, manual or auto box, air suspension, **£79,000**. Most models from Urban Ranger; 47 + 23 standees, 811; 33 + 12 standees + Auto & Telma, 709; 29 + 8 standees + wheelchair vehicle and luxury coach spec. All in stock for instant delivery. P/X welcome. **Tel. Blythwood Motors on 0141 221 3165 or 0141 639 6107 evenings.** (62968/ME)

MINIS & MIDIS

LEYLAND SWIFT

Mid underfloor 6 cylinder diesel, power steering, Elme Orion 31 luxury seats plus courier, front entrance power door, large boot, painted white, test May '97

£26,500

TOYOTA OPTIMO

1990 (H), 18 recliners, seatbelts, test Oct '96

£19,500

TOYOTA OPTIMO

1987 (E), 4 cylinder, 21 seats, power door, curtains, test Sept '96

£9,950

Tel. 01234 740057

0831 372763

(62933/MM)

KNIGHT SALES

Several minibuses,
16 - 25 seats, all tested
from £1,000 + VAT
possible part exchange,
almost anything considered.

Tel: 01772 626272

(62727/MM)

MINIS & MIDIS



WESTERN COMMERCIAL

NEW STOCK

711 MERCEDES 25 seats, coachbuilt, power door, deep boot

711 MERCEDES, 24 seats, van conversion, luxury coach spec, power door

609 MERCEDES VAN CONVERSION, 24 seats, power door, luxury, power door

412 MERCEDES, 16 seater, luxury, seatbelts

USED

1993K 814 MERCEDES PLAXTON, 33 seats, luxury

1990H TOYOTA OPTIMO, 21 seats, luxury, tv, etc, choice

1987 MERCEDES 609, 18 seats, van doors, would suit tail-lift

1987 MERCEDES 609, 22 seats, luggage pen, power door, coach seats, destination equipment

(62741/MB)

BRIDGE STREET, NEWBRIDGE, NR EDINBURGH

CONTACT JOHN LEITCH on 0131-333 2001

or EVENINGS 01357 521888

ERRINGTONS

FOR



TOYOTA OPTIMO

NEW TOYOTA OPTIMO III GL, 21 seats, grey interior, finished all white, immediate delivery from stock.

1994 TOYOTA OPTIMO III GL, 21 seater, fitted radio/PA, finished all white with grey interior, MoT 1997.

1992 K TOYOTA OPTIMO II GL, 21 seater + courier, radio, grey interior, finished all white, MoT Nov 1996

1989 G TOYOTA OPTIMO GL, 21 seater, fawn interior, very clean, MoT Aug 1996.

1976 BEDFORD 330, 6 cylinder, diesel, 5 speed gearbox, Faro II, 20 seater, fitted power door and radio, recently retrimmed grey moquette, MoT March '97, very useful vehicle.

Evington, Leicester LE5 6DQ. Tel. (0116) 273 0421 Fax. (0116) 273 9372

TOYOTA PARTS AND SERVICE - Contact Bryn Taylor (0116) 259 2131 (62962/MB)

1989 PSV FORD TRANSIT, SWB, vgc, recent retrim, seatbelts, 12 passenger seats, **£3,000 + VAT**. Tel. 01478 52506.

(62906/MB)

1989 TALBOT EXPRESS, diesel, 12 seater, MoT expired, engine runs but tired, **£800 to clear**. Tel. 01782 563563.

(62932/MB)

Coach and Bus Week ending 4 May 1996

Estd. 1983

TRAMONTANA

Coach and Minibus Sales and Service

1. Seatbelts fitted
2. Coach Rental
3. Painting
4. Insurance Estimates



(62964/MB)

MOTHERWELL ML1 5LE TEL: (01698) 861790/253845
CONTACT: DOUGLAS TELFER FAX: (01698) 860778

1993 'L' LEYLAND DAF 400

Peugeot Driveline, P.A.S., turbo, 16 H. B. seats, MoT Aug '96, lap diagonal seatbelts, tinted windows, roof vents, extractor, racks, radio/cassette, towbar, one owner, F.S.H., immaculate. £15,500

1984 LEYLAND CUB, ex-Council transporter, 21 low back seats, Ratcliffe tail-lift, 7 wheelchair facility, tested to Nov '96.....£3,000 ono

1980 MERCEDES 508D, 18 high back moquette seats, taxed and tested to Aug '96£1,500 ono

Tel.

0114 275 4838

(62895/MB)

Houston Ramm

1990 G Freight Rover Sherpa, 20-seat coach, Carlyle Mark II bodywork, power doors, new MoT, 5-speed gearboxes, NEW COACH SEATS with 3-point belts, includes your choice of moquette and exterior livery, outstanding condition, £7,995.

1989 F Iveco 49.10 Carlyle, 25-seat bus, automatic gearbox, power steering, 8 standees, resprayed white, new MoT, superb appearance, £6,495.

1988 F Iveco 49.10 Dormobile 25-seat bus, 5-speed manual gearbox, power door, saloon heater, 6 standees, destination gear, brown/beige/orange interior, new MoT, repainted, outstanding condition, £6,995.

1988 F Dodge S56, 25-seater PMT service bus, automatic box, new MoT, £5,495.

1988 E Freight Rover Sherpa, 20-seat bus, Carlyle Mark II bodywork, power doors, new MoT, 5-speed gearboxes, good selection, £3,495.

1987 D Freight Rover Sherpa, 18-seat coach, luxury seats, luggage pen, resprayed white, new MoT, £3,995.

1986 C Ford Transit, 20-seat bus, DI diesel, Carlyle Mark I conversion, new MoT, power door, excellent condition, £3,995

1986 C/D Ford Transit, 16-seat buses, Carlyle/Dormobile bodies, new or long MoT's, many with new panels/wings, power doors, excellent workhorses, from £2,195

1986 C Freight Rover, 20-seat bus, Dormobile body, new MoT, repainted, excellent value at just £2,695

All prices include preparation to our usual high standards.

Part exchange welcome. Licensed Credit Broker.

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(62952/MB)

CONCEPT COACHCRAFT

Leyland Daf 400 LWB H/roof PAS Diesel lux h/spec minibus,

16 high back seats on tracking, soft trim, tinted windows, parcel racks, quad vent, rear saloon heater, lowered entrance step, radio cassette + 8 speakers, 4 interior lights with dim facility etc.

Price £18,495 + VAT + RFL.

As above Turbo

Price £19,495 + VAT + RFL.

Merc 412 Sprinter, luxury high spec, 16 forward facing seats independent heater £28,995 + VAT.

Ford Transit - Luxury 14 seat minibus, power steering, diesel. £19,995 + VAT.

Ford Transit 280 - high cube, 16 forward facing seats, hi-spec. £24,995 + VAT + RFL.



(62797/MB)

Tel: 0161-406 9322 / 0161-456 9747 (eve-wkd)

Coach and Bus Week ending 4 May 1996

QUALITY CONVERSIONS

DEANSgate SPRING SAVERS

	Normal Price	SPECIAL PRICE
FORD TRANSIT ELWB		
Deansgate Red Rose, 16 seat, luxury, diesel, power steering, luggage racks	£24,980	£23,750
FORD TRANSIT LWB		
Deansgate Regent, 12-16 seat, luxury, diesel, power steering, central locking	£20,190	£19,200
FORD TRANSIT SWB		
Deansgate 8 Seater Taxibus, diesel, wheelchair accessible, power steering, folding rear seat, heated driver's seat, alloy wheels, rear wash & wipe, electric front windows, central locking	£14,980	£14,250
RENAULT MASTER		
Deansgate Red Rose, 16 seat, luxury, diesel, power steering, luggage racks	£20,500	£19,000

The above Prices are Subject to VAT

DEANSgate QUALITY CONVERSIONS
3-5 HADFIELD STREET, CORNBROOK
MANCHESTER M16 9FE

Tel: 0161-877 4884

Evenings: 0161-370 1039

Fax: 0161-873 8320

(61366/MB)

MERCEDES 608D, 1986, 1 x 24, 1 x 20 Reeve Burgess service buses£4,500 each
J REG LEYLAND DAF, 20 service bus£9,750
92 J TALBOT EXPRESS, 12 seater, seatbelts fitted.....£7,500
M REG RENAULT MASTER, 16 seats, under floor luggage, coach rear end.....£17,500

Vehicles being sold due to change of contracts

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(62922/MB)

1995 N IVECO CACCIAMAL

20 seater, recliners with arm rests and foot well, luxury coach, metallic blue/silver air-con, fridge, coffee, radio/pa/cassette, one owner, 27,000km only.

Ready to tour, huge saving on list.

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(62954/MB)

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23 seats,
all with current
MoT tests,

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(62920/MB)

20-SEAT DODGE MINIBUSES with
MoT's. £2,950 + VAT. Tel. 0121 558 0087.
(62540/MB)

LEYLAND DAF 400, H reg, Peugeot
diesel, 16 high back seats, PSV mini
coach tax, new test, good condition,
£7,250 ono, no VAT. Tel: 0116 288 5911,
Mobile 0585 627074. (62550/MB)

1989 PSV FORD TRANSIT, SWB, vgc,
recent retrim, seatbelts, 12 passenger
seats, £3,000 + VAT. Tel. 01474 852506.
(62906/MB)

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MERC SKYLINERS

1988 'E' auto, V10 £79,000

1988 'F' auto, V10 £85,900

Includes retrimming & colour
of your choice

3 x 1990 'H' manual, V8, twin turbo
£109,000 each

Prices allow for part exchange.

(62738/NE)

Supplied with a minimum 9 months MoT
painted in your livery.

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advert for the
price of 2**

**Want to
know more?**

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1984 SETRA DOUBLE DECKER

74 seater Executive, includes
toilet, coffee, fridge, video, etc,
tested until Jan 1997.

£45,000 ono + VAT

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(62881/SET)

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PAID FOR (interesting to note that the
UK Coach and Bus Industry chooses to
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you, call Neil on 01733 467147.

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SETRA 215HD

1987, 49 seats, toilet and all
usual Kassbohrer refinements,
mint condition and used on tour
work only. Tested April 1997.

£68,000 + VAT

Crusader Holidays

01255 431777

(62925/SET)

SETRA 215HD

1985, 49 reclining seats,
Voith retarder, toilet, video/TV,
fridge, water boiler, curtains and
carpets, excellent condition,
all usual Setra refinements.

£52,500 + VAT

£49,950 + VAT for quick sale

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01708 734624 (eves)

(62914/SET)

SCANIA

NEW SCANIA K113 VAN HOOL ALIZEE H

choice of 49/53 with demountable toilet and with or
without air-conditioning, 57 fixed seats, all available for
immediate delivery

USED SCANIA

1993 K SCANIA K113 VAN HOOL, 49 recliners, toilet, radio/PA/cassette,
double glazed.

1992 K SCANIA K93 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200, 53 recliners +
courier, radio/PA/cassette.

1990 G SCANIA K113 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500, 53 recliners +
courier, radio/PA/cassette, double glazed.

VOLVO

1993 K VOLVO B10M JONCKHEERE DEAUVILLE, 49 seats, toilet,
radio/PA/cassette, double glazed.

1992 K VOLVO B10M JONCKHEERE DEAUVILLE, 49 seats, toilet,
drinks machine, radio/PA/cassette.

OTHERS

1988 E NEOPLAN SKYLINER, 77 recliners, toilet, radio/PA/cassette.

1986 NEOPLAN SKYLINER, 75 recliners, toilet, drinks, radio/PA/cassette.



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DISTRIBUTORS

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(62960/SC)

VOLVO

WILSONS COACHES LTD

1990 VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL, 53 reclining seats, rear fixed sunken
toilet, continental door, drinks machine, double glazed, wired for radio/TV,
MoT 10/96. Choice of 2£82,000

1989 VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL, super high, 51/53 reclining seats, centre
sunken toilet, water boiler, fridge, wired for TV and video, MoT 3/97
.....£72,000

1988 VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL, super high, 51/53 reclining seats, centre
sunken toilet, water boiler, fridge, wired for TV and video, driver's bunk,
MoT 3/97£65,000

1988 F VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL, 52 reclining seats, rear floor toilet, wired
for TV and video, MoT 1/97£65,000

PART EXCHANGE CONSIDERED

Tel: 01555 840249

(62861/VO)

VOLVO B10M GLE 340 Intercooler Jonckheere Deauville

1989 (G), 49 reclining seats, tv,
video, boiler, fridge, toilet, double
glazing, new engine fitted by Volvo,
2 year warranty, new clutch,
new tach, all under warranty,
very good condition.

£76,500 ono

PAT'S COACHES

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(63004/VO)

1985 VOLVO B10M 3.2 PLAXTON LOW DRIVE

53 recliners, 1 year's MoT,
only two owners from new,
we have owned since 1987, no shuttles,
warranted 252k miles only,
Telma, Webasto, full length underfloor
locker, plus many more extras

£39,500 + VAT

Tel: 0171 739 5454 (Office)

(62938/VO)

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and Services call Michelle on 01733
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D REG VOLVO B10M

Fitted Duple Dominant Service
bus body, 55 seats + 23
standing, new 1 year ticket,
excellent condition, choice of 2.

£45,000 each

Ensign Bus and

Coach Sales Ltd

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Fax: 01708 631086

(62800/VO)

VOLVO B58 Plaxton

1976 (R), 49 seater, engine 2 years old,
6 speed box, MoT Sept '96,
seats need refurbishing

£6,000 + VAT ono

Tel. 01474 852444

(Ask for Steve)

(62867/VO)

VOLVO B10M CARIBBEAN

1983, 51 reclining seats, courier seat,
carpeted centre gangway, double glazed
with curtains, rear continental door,
6-speed ZF, Telma, ferry lift,
Eberspacher heater, electrically heated
front screens, PA radio + cassette
system, immaculate condition.

£24,500 ono

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(60897/VO)

1984 B10M/GL VAN HOOL SUPER HIGH

Full Exec, inc: rear servery with sunken
toilet, coffee machine, fridge, video,
driver's bunk and on board coach wash,
etc., tested Dec 1996.

£37,500 + VAT ono

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(62882/VO)

VAN HOOL

VAN HOOL 1988 ALICRON

49 seats, toilet and all usual
Van Hool refinements plus
power centre door, driver's door
and SUTRAK air-conditioning
system. Owned by us from new
and used only on our own
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Tested March 1997.

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(62926/VAN)

VINTAGE VEHICLES

1966 BEDFORD VAM V PLAXTON

excellent condition,
taxed and MoT'd til March '97

£3,500

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(62919/VV)

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EX-MoD Leyland Tiger, Plaxton, 54 seater, up-market service bus. Into service December '86, tinted glass, double passenger front entrance. TLII engine, 6-speed ZF gearbox, superb condition, sold with 12 months PSV, choice of 2.



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(62941/VSM)

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Fax: (0116) 2387128**



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- 1992 MERCEDES 811, Europa Classique**, 29 high back luxury passenger seats, parcel racks, in excellent condition, complete with new MoT.
- 1990 DAF SB3000, Caetano Algarve II**, 51 reclining seats and courier seat, wired for video, rear nearside saloon toilet, very long MoT, immaculate condition, available immediately.
- 1989 SETRA 215HD**, 49 reclining seats, centre sunken toilet, continental door, drinks machine, video, absolutely immaculate condition, available shortly.
- 1987 MCW METRORIDER**, 23 bus seats plus 7 standees. MoT 5/9/96.
- 1987 LEYLAND ROYAL TIGER, Van Hool Alizee**, 51 reclining seats and courier seat, video and two monitors, rear saloon toilet. Very long MoT. Exterior white.
- 1987 OPTARE CITY PACER AUTOMATIC**, Volkswagen diesel, bus spec, 25 seater.
- 1985 DAF MB200, Plaxton Paramount**, 49 reclining seats, drinks machine, wired for video, toilet at rear offside. New MoT.
- 1984 LAG Panoramic**, 49 reclining seats, toilet, courier seat, wired for video, in nice clean condition, available immediately.
- 1984 BOVA FUTURA**, 53 reclining seats, recent retrim, excellent condition.
- 1983 DAF MB200, Caetano Alpha GT**, 53 reclining passenger seats, power plug door. Very long MoT.
- 1981 VOLVO B58, Duple Dominant IV**, 46 seater, semi automatic, double glazed, power door.
- 1980 VOLVO B58, Plaxton Supreme V Express**, 53 seater.
- 1980 BEDFORD YMT, Duple Dominant II**, power door, 53 seater.
- 1979 VOLVO B58 12 metre, Plaxton Supreme**, 53 seater with courier seat, power operated door.

IVECO BUS

(62966/VSM)



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Fax: 01494 716331**

VOLVOS

- 1988 NOV F VOLVO B9M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200**, 43 fixed seats, POD, pannier lockers, radio & PA.....£57,500
- 1988 VOLVO B10M IKARUS BLUE DANUBE 358**, 49/53 rec seats, courier, centre demountable toilet, continental door, radio/PA/TV, low mileage.....£55,000
- 1988 VOLVO B10M JONCKHEERE P599**, 51 reclining seats, courier, rear sunken toilet, d/glazed, radio/PA, new test.....£69,500
- 1988 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200**, 53 reclining seats, double glazing, Telma, pannier lockers, Webasto, new test.....£57,500
- 1985 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500**, 53 retrimmed reclining seats, courier seat, d/glazed, Webasto, provision for centre sunken toilet/continental door, radio/PA, curtains.....£45,000
- 1984 VOLVO B10M BERKHOF ESPRIT**, 53 reclining seats, courier, radio/PA.....£32,500
- 1984 VOLVO B10 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500**, 49 recliners, courier, centre demountable toilet/continental door, radio/PA.....£34,500
- 1983 VOLVO B10M CAETANO ALGARVE**, 49 reclining seats, centre toilet, continental door, radio/PA.....£32,500
- 1983 A VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500**, 49 reclining seats, courier seat, auto transmission, Webasto, d/glazed, boiler, fridge, wired for TV, test Aug '96.....£32,500

OTHERS

- 1995 SCANIA K113 VAN HOOL ALIZEE**, 49 reclining seats, courier, rear sunken toilet, d/glazed, Telma, EGS, TV, video.....£135,000
- 1994 SEPT M BOVA FUTURA FHD**, 49 sable reclining seats, courier, centre sunken toilet, pre-heater, bunk, d/glazed, 2 monitors, boiler, fridge, full air conditioning, low mileage.....£125,000
- 1993 K SCANIA K113 VAN HOOL ALIZEE H**, 49 reclining seats, courier, centre sunken demountable toilet/continental door, retarder, d/glazed, bunk.....£112,500
- 1992 SCANIA K113 PLAXTON PREMIER 3.2**, 53 reclining seats, courier seat, 7 speed gearbox, Telma, d/glazed, blinds, Webasto, POD, new test.....£92,500
- 1991 J DENNIS JAVELIN PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200**, 53 reclining seats, courier, POD, radio/PA, large capacity locker.....£59,500

- 1990 IVECO CORROSERIE LORRAINE**, 30 reclining seats, courier, TV, radio/PA, clean.....£30,500
- 1990 DAF 2305 CAETANO ALGARVE**, 53 reclining seats, courier, tinted glass, radio/PA.....£67,500
- 1989 KASSBOHRER SETRA ST 215 HD**, 49 reclining new retrimmed seats, courier, demountable sunken toilet/continental door, new reconditioned engine, Webasto, Telma, radio/PA, immaculate.....£87,500
- 1989 SCANIA K112 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 4000**, double decker, 67 recliners, 2 crew seats, toilet, fridge, Webasto, retarder, d/glazed, radio/PA, 4 tables.....£79,500
- 1987 SCANIA K92**, East Lancs double decker, 92 seater, 14.6ft high, choice of 2.....£30,000
- 1986 NEOPLAN SKYLINER**, 75 reclining seats + courier, toilet, servery, fridge, Cummins 14 litre engine, auto, clean.....£42,500
- 1986 SCANIA K112 JONCKHEERE P599**, 51 reclining seats + courier, centre demountable toilet, C.A.G., fridge, boiler, monitor, video.....£45,000
- 1986 C NEOPLAN PLAXTON 4000**, 71 reclining seats, courier seat, Gardner engine, ZF auto, d/glazed, radio/PA, TVs, clean, new test.....£32,500
- 1986 TIGER 250 DUPL 340**, 46 reclining seats, rear toilet and continental door.....£22,500
- 1985 LEYLAND DOYEN EXECUTIVE**, 16 fully luxury reclining seats + 12 rear lounge, full centre galley with all facilities.....£18,500
- 1983 LEYLAND NATIONAL II BUS**, Leyland engine, 2 door, 31 seats, 25 standing, clean.....£14,000
- 1980 PP FORD R1114 SUPREME IV**, 53 seats.....£3,900
- 1980 FORD R1014 DUPL DOMINANT II**, 45 seater, POD, low mileage, immaculate.....£4,750
- 1977 BEDFORD YMQ PLAXTON SUPREME**, 45 seater, POD, clean, tested September.....£3,000
- 1976/77 BEDFORD YMT DUPL DOMINANT I**, 53 seater, POD, radio/PA, choice of 2, clean, good test.....£2,000 each

MINI BUS

- 1989 MERCEDES 507 M2M**, 20 seater, finished white.....£13,500
- 1986 TALBOT EXPRESS**, 14 seater, high roof.....£2,750
- 1985 FORD TRANSIT DORMOBILE BUS**, 16 seater, new test.....£1,750

COACHES URGENTLY REQUIRED FOR CASH

(62795/VSM)

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IN QUALITY
NEW & USED
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**PARTS STOCKISTS:
BOVA, VAN HOOL
TOYOTA OPTIMO**

**1994 VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL
ALIZEE-HE 12M**

49/53 recliners, centre sunken demountable toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows with roller blinds, wired TV/video, finished white. M.O.T. OCTOBER 1996

**1993 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON
PREMIERE 350 12M**

53 recliners, red/black stripe moquette, rear continental door, double glazed tinted side windows, courier seat, power entrance door, finished white/orange. M.O.T. SEPTEMBER 1996

**1993 DENNIS JAVELIN CAETANO
ALGARVE II 12M**

53 recliners, beige/brown moquette, double glazed tinted windows, curtains, courier seat, power entrance door, finished duo blue. M.O.T. JANUARY 1997

**1990 DAF SB3000 VAN HOOL
ALIZEE-DH 12M**

51/53 recliners, re-trimmed brown graffiti moquette, centre sunken demountable toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted windows, curtains, courier seat, provision for driver's berth, water boiler, wired TV/video, low driving position, finished cream/brown. M.O.T. NOVEMBER 1996

**1989 (August) LEYLAND TIGER
260 DUPLÉ 320 12M**

53 recliners, brown/orange moquette, double glazed tinted side windows, pull-down blinds, power entrance door, TELMA retarder, chassis autolube, finished all white. M.O.T. SEPTEMBER 1996

**1989 LEYLAND TIGER 260 DUPLÉ
320 12M**

53 recliners, brown/orange moquette, double glazed tinted side windows with pull-down blinds, power entrance door, TELMA retarder, chassis autolube, finished all white. M.O.T. MARCH 1996

**Immediate Availability
NEW BOVA FUTURA FHD 12.330**

51/55 recliners, centre sunken toilet, continental door, double tinted double glazing, water boiler, coolbox, finished all white, 1 ONLY

NEW BOVA FUTURA FLD 12.270

53 recliners, seat belts, double tinted double glazing, finished all white, 1 ONLY

June Availability

**NEW VOLVO B10M GL
VAN HOOL ALIZEE-HE**

49/53 recliners, centre sunken toilet, continental door, 1 ONLY

**NEW VOLVO B9M
VAN HOOL ALIZEE-HE**

38 recliners, rear toilet, CHOICE OF TWO

**1989 LEYLAND TIGER
(Cummins 250) DUPLÉ 340 12M**

53 recliners, brown/orange moquette, O/S rear sunken toilet, continental door, tinted side windows, curtains, water boiler, wired TV/video, power entrance door, finished cream/red/orange. M.O.T. FEBRUARY 1997

**1989 LEYLAND TIGER
(Cummins 250) DUPLÉ 320 12M**

57 seats, red moquette, tinted side windows, TELMA retarder, power entrance door, finished cream/red/orange. M.O.T. DECEMBER 1996

**1989 VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL
ALIZEE-H 12M**

52 recliners, brown/orange moquette, courier seat, tinted side windows, power entrance door, finished all white. M.O.T. FEBRUARY 1997

1989 SCANIA K93 DUPLÉ 320 12M

55 seats, grey/orange moquette, tinted side windows, power entrance door, finished all white. M.O.T. NOVEMBER 1996

**1988 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON
PARAMOUNT 3500 12M**

51 recliners, beige/orange moquette, tinted side windows, curtains, drinks machine, o/s rear sunken toilet, continental door, power entrance door, finished cream/red. M.O.T. JANUARY 1997

**1988 LEYLAND TIGER 260
PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 12M**

49 recliners, red/grey moquette, sunken toilet o/s rear, continental door, double glazed side windows, curtains, courier seat, water boiler, finished cream/grey. M.O.T. JANUARY 1997

**1987 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON
PARAMOUNT 3500 12M**

49 recliners, RETRIMMED grey/red moquette, courier seat, rear sunken toilet, continental door, tinted side windows, curtains, drinks machine, TELMA retarder, power operated entrance door, finished white. M.O.T. MARCH 1997

**1984 DAF SB2300 JONCKHEERE
JUBILEE P50 12M**

49 recliners, brown/beige/orange moquette, rear floor mounted toilet, continental door, tinted side windows with curtains and blinds, drinks machine, finished white. M.O.T. APRIL 1997

**1983 (November) VOLVO B10M GLE
JONCKHEERE JUBILEE P599 12M**

53 recliners, grey/red/orange moquette, tinted side windows, curtains, courier seat, TELMA retarder, power entrance door, finished white/orange/black. M.O.T. DECEMBER 1996

**1983 DAF DKFL PLAXTON
PARAMOUNT 3500 12M**

49 recliners, beige/blue moquette, O/S rear sunken toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows, curtains, courier seat, drinks machine, fridge, wired TV/video, power entrance door, finished all white. M.O.T. AUGUST 1996 (62810/VSM)



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1987 D FREIGHT ROVER 2.5, 16 seat luxury minicoach, MoT April 97.

1982 Y FORD 360 T DUPLÉ DOMINANT 4, 53 seat coach, white exterior, MoT May 96.

1979 T LEYLAND NATIONAL, S10 engine, 49 seats, 24 standees, MoT January 96.

1980 V LEYLAND LEOPARD PLAXTON SUPREME, 49 seats, cream exterior, power door, MoT October 96.

1979 PP VOLVO B58 AUTOMATIC VAN HOOL ARAGON, 48 seats, toilet, MoT March 96..

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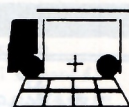
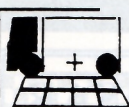
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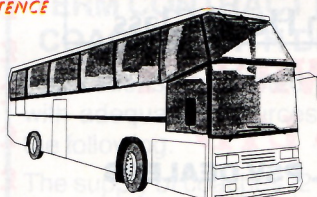
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Coach and Bus Week ending 4 May 1996

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(62759/VEH)

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(60481/P/WIP)

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DAF - Engines, crankshafts, con-rods, camshafts, cylinder heads, blocks, starters, gearboxes, axles, and differentials. All in stock.

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(62544/VEH)

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(62837/VEH)

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467147**

LONDON BOROUGH OF BARNET DIRECTORATE OF TECHNICAL SERVICES TERM CONTRACT FOR THE PROVISION OF COACHES WITH DRIVERS (21 TO 72 SEAT)

Applications are invited from suitably experienced firms
with adequate resources who wish to be considered for
the following.

The supply of coaches (21 to 72 seat) with drivers.

The contract will be for a period of four years commencing
September 1996. This contract is for the transportation of
both adults and children, many of whom have learning
difficulties, to and from the Council's day care centres,
schools and other establishments.

Applications, which must be received not later than 5 June
1996, must be made in writing to

Chief Executive's Directorate
Contracts Unit
Mill Hill Depot
Bittacy Hill
Mill Hill
London NW7 0IL

Marked for the attention of Mr. P. Evans

Applications received after the above date will not be
considered.

The reference 3348 must be stated on applications.

A charge of £20 will be made to cover the immediate cost
of preparation of tender documents.

Cheques should be made payable to the London Borough
of Barnet and accompany applications.

**If you require any further information, please contact
Max Booth, tel: 0181 373 4878 ext 5116, who will be
pleased to assist.**

(62921/TEN)

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01733 467144 Appointments & Tenders

COACH CONTROLLER - OPERATIONS

Controller required by large executive company based in Luton operating a fleet of 50 vehicles to supervise our coach operations. We are seeking a person with extensive experience in high class corporate, UK and continental touring work. Flexibility and the ability to work under pressure essential together with being able to work well as a team. Shift and weekend work necessary.

Please send full cv with past experience, qualifications and present salary to:

Mr. G. Morton
Hallmark Cars Ltd
Hallmark House, Luton, Beds LU1 1TW

(62924/APP)

PCV DRIVERS REQUIRED

Luton based Executive Coach Company with a large modern fleet of coaches requires PCV Drivers.

Drivers must have experience in corporate and continental touring work.

Please apply to:

Mr. G. A. Morton
Hallmark Cars Ltd.

Hallmark House, Dallow Road, Luton, Beds LU1 1TW

(62923/APP)

WANTED FOR CASH

is seeking an

**ASSISTANT DEPOT
ENGINEERING MANAGER**
based at BEDFORD

STAGECOACH UNITED COUNTIES, operating 350 buses and coaches in the Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire areas, is seeking to appoint an Assistant Engineering Manager for its Bedford District to be responsible for controlling engineering standards for a fleet of 125 vehicles.

The successful applicant will be responsible to the Engineering Manager, Bedford for the maintenance and presentation of the fleet of minibuses, conventional buses and coaches based in the Bedford district, to the Company's and Department of Transport's standards.

Applicants should be fully qualified, with a proven track record of management and motivation of staff, with the ability to manage and control within agreed budgets.

The Bedford area is busy and challenging where the position of Assistant Engineering Manager represents a valuable opportunity for promotion for an enthusiastic and ambitious engineer.

Salary will be dependent on qualifications and experience. Contributory pension scheme, sick pay scheme, generous travel concessions form part of the conditions package.

Applications in writing by 31st May 1996 with full career details to Mr Barry Warner, Managing Director, Stagecoach United Counties, Rothersthorpe Avenue, Northampton. NN4 8UT

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SALES EXECUTIVES

To represent our Company and products in the Midlands and the North. A good knowledge of Public Service Vehicles would be an advantage. A flair and enthusiasm for the product combined with a positive attitude towards customer satisfaction are essential requirements.

Salary and fringe benefits package are negotiable.

Please submit C.V. for the attention of:-

Sales Director

Salvador Caetano (UK) Limited

Mill Lane, Heather, Coalville, Leicestershire LE67 2QE

(62792/APP)



ENGINEERING MANAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

We are an expanding ambitious Management Employee owned bus and coach company, operating over 450 vehicles from sites in North West London and its environs.

We are looking for an equally ambitious manager with a PCV/HGV engineering background to join our successful management team.

The successful applicant would be responsible for the effective and efficient maintenance and presentation of up to 130 vehicles (midibuses, conventional buses and coaches), within appropriate budgets.

Ideally, applicants should be skilled engineers (either from a Craft/VECAS, NVQ Level 3 background or hold an HND or degree) and be able to demonstrate suitable supervisory and/or managerial skills. We are also interested in hearing from graduate Engineers with limited managerial experience.

A competitive salary is offered which will be dependent on qualifications and experience. In addition, various other features are available which combine to form an attractive benefits package.

Written applications with CV, details of current duties, responsibilities and remuneration to Mr. S. Durrant, Human Resources Manager, Metroline Holdings Limited, 118-122 College, Harrow, Middlesex HA1 1DB.

Closing date 24 May 1996.

(62831/APP)

Coach and Bus Week ending 4 May 1996

Appointments & Tenders

Tel: 01733 467144

Fax: 01733 467154



AREA SALES EXECUTIVES / MANAGERS REQUIRED

Do you have the required experience, enthusiasm and interest to sell new and used coaches in the knowledge and confidence that we are not second best when it comes to product and quality presentation to our most valuable asset – the customer.

Excellent basic pay plus commission and other benefits in a good working environment.

Contact in confidence Bill Povey, Sales Director

Telephone number: 01709 700600 ext. 101

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NEOPLAN

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(62959/APP)

GENERAL MANAGER VACANCY

A progressive Company is seeking an experienced General Manager to take charge of one of its autonomous bus operating units in the London area.

This is an exciting opportunity for an experienced professional to demonstrate their ability to deliver the highest possible quality of service within exacting performance standards.

An attractive salary is offered, commensurate with ability and experience, together with a company car.

Applications should include full details of relevant experience and current position. All applications will be dealt with in the strictest confidence.

Please apply to Box No. 62793

**Coach and Bus Week,
EMAP Automotive Ltd.,**

**Wentworth House, Wentworth Street,
Peterborough, PE1 1DS**

(62793/APP)

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IPSWICH

Up to £19,818

The Education Department arranges and provides an extensive transport service to schools and colleges throughout Suffolk. It is a complex operation with an annual budget of £6.5m. Based in the busy Transport Section at County Hall, you will be responsible to the Transport Manager, provide a professional service and be principally concerned with the implementation of the County Council's education transport policy and the efficient functioning of the service.

You will need to have broad experience of office practice, including the use of computer systems. The ability to work accurately under pressure and good oral and written communication skills are essential. It is desirable that applicants have had experience in the passenger transport field, either within the Local Authority sector or in an operational undertaking.

(This is a re-advertisement - previous applicants need not re-apply).

Further information and application form available from the Education Department, Personnel Section, St Andrew House, County Hall, Ipswich. (For 24 hour recruitment answerphone service tel: 01473 236119). Please quote ref E348.

Closing date: 20 May, 1996.



Suffolk County Council

*Working towards
equality of opportunity*

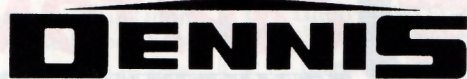


Coach and Bus Week ending 4 May 1996

Appointments & Tenders

Tel: 01733 467144

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REGIONAL SALES MANAGER

Dennis Specialist Vehicles is a successful market leader in innovative bus, coach and fire vehicle chassis design and manufacture.

We now have a requirement for a Regional Sales Manager in our Bus Sales department for the central England region.

Candidates will have good sales experience combined with a mechanical engineering qualification or a good understanding of the U.K. Coach market.

We offer a competitive package including sales bonus, use of Company car, contributory pension scheme and 25 days annual holiday.

Suitably qualified and interested applicants should send a full c.v. to:

**Mrs B. Patrick, Personnel and Training Manager,
Dennis Specialist Vehicles, Dennis Way,
Guildford, Surrey GU1 1AF.**

(62955/APP)

London Transport bus services

London Transport Buses will shortly be inviting tenders for the operation of the following London Transport bus routes.

35 Clapham Junction - Shoreditch

38 Clapton - Victoria

40 Dulwich - Blackwall

42 Camberwell Green - Liverpool Street

108 Lewisham - Stratford

345 Peckham - South Kensington

N38 Chingford/Chingford Hatch - Trafalgar Square

These routes will be tendered on the basis of net cost contracts.

If you are interested and have already submitted your pre-qualification documents then you need take no further action at this stage. However if you are interested and have not completed London Transport's pre-qualification system for bus service tendering then you must do so by 16th May 1996 in order to receive invitations to tender for the above routes.

Pre-qualification documents are available by writing to:

Mr T Wynne

Buyer

London Transport Buses

172 Buckingham Palace Road

London SW1W 9TN

Telephone 0171 918 3812



**London Transport
Buses**

▼ Coach

From Yeates to Plaxton

BARRY McCrae has moved from coach dealer Yeates to bodybuilder Plaxton as its southern area regional sales manager, while **Martin Arthington** moves in from chassis manufacturer, Dennis.

Both join the Plaxton coach sales team headed by Kevin Wood.

Mr McCrae has 13 years coach industry experience. Before joining Yeates in 1993 he worked in sales and sales

administration for Jonckheere UK and Roeselare Sales.

Mr Arthington had been with Dennis since 1994 and was previously north west fleet sales manager for Pirelli, selling tyres to coach and truck operations in the region.

His Plaxton sales responsibilities are to cover North Wales, the north west of England, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

▼ Supplier

Technical support engineer

IAN King has moved from the Go-Ahead Group to Invertec as technical support engineer.

He is a trained coach and bus electrician, bringing eight years experience in this capacity to lighting specialist, Invertec.

His new role is to help Invertec provide its customers with technical and practical support.

▼ Coach

Knight on!

Dennis national sales manager

by Mike Morgan

PETER Knight has been confirmed as national sales manager for Dennis-chassis coaches.

He takes over the position vacated by **Mike Martin**, who moved to short-term hire and rental specialist Cheshire Bus & Coach earlier this year.

Mr Knight, 37, has been with Dennis

for four-and-a-half years. Prior to his recent promotion he was southern area sales manager. A third member of the Dennis sales force to move recently is **Martin Arthington**. He has left the company to join Plaxton — see story left.



Peter Knight:

▼ Coach

Mackenzie joining STC consultancy

JOHN Mackenzie will join Sian Thornthwaite Consultants in Epsom this month. Mr Mackenzie was formally director of Hampshire Transport

Management responsible for some 1,300 vehicles. As such he has extensive experience of fleet management, vehicle specifications (especially accessi-

ble vehicles) and CCT requirements. He will join STC to specialise in fleet issues relating to school and accessible transport.



SUBSCRIPTION ORDER FORM

Coach and Bus Week is the news weekly for coach and bus operators. *Transit* provides vital analysis of, and information on, the UK public transport scene every fortnight. Together they make an unbeatable and invaluable package. All annual subscription rates include delivery by first class post. It is important to fill out all parts of this form. NB: *Transit* is not available on subscription without *Coach and Bus Week*.

Payment (please tick as appropriate)

Coach and Bus Week

	1 year	2 years	3 years
UK	£49.00	£88.00	£125.00
Eire/Europe	1 year £92.00.	Airmail 1 year £124.00	

Transit (Existing Coach and Bus Week Subscribers)

	1 year	2 years	3 years
UK	£72.00	£129.00	£183.00
Eire/Europe	1 year £115.00.	Airmail 1 year £147.00	

Coach and Bus Week and Transit (New Subscribers)

	1 year	2 years	3 years
UK	£121.00	£217.00	£308.00
Eire/Europe	1 year £164.00.	Airmail 1 year £196.00	

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.
YOUR COMPANY DETAILS

1. What is your primary job title?

(Tick one only)

- Owner/Director ☐ 01
Senior/General Manager..... ☐ 02
Engineering/Service Manager ☐ 03
Other (please specify)..... ☐ 04

2. What is your company's main business function?

- Bus Operator..... ☐ 01
Coach Operator..... ☐ 05
Coach & Bus Operator ☐ 02
Local Government ☐ 03
Other (please specify)..... ☐ 04

3. How many vehicles does your company own/operate?

(Tick all that apply)

- | | Buses | Coaches |
|----------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1-5 | <input type="checkbox"/> 01 | <input type="checkbox"/> 10 |
| 6-10 | <input type="checkbox"/> 02 | <input type="checkbox"/> 11 |
| 11-15 | <input type="checkbox"/> 03 | <input type="checkbox"/> 12 |
| 16-25 | <input type="checkbox"/> 04 | <input type="checkbox"/> 13 |
| 26-39 | <input type="checkbox"/> 05 | <input type="checkbox"/> 14 |
| 40-100 | <input type="checkbox"/> 06 | <input type="checkbox"/> 15 |
| 101-400 | <input type="checkbox"/> 07 | <input type="checkbox"/> 16 |
| 401-1000 | <input type="checkbox"/> 08 | <input type="checkbox"/> 17 |
| 1000+ | <input type="checkbox"/> 09 | <input type="checkbox"/> 18 |

4. Do you have responsibility for the recommendation/
purchase and/or specification of the following?

(Tick all that apply)

- | | Pur | Spec | Rec |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Vehicles | <input type="checkbox"/> 01 | <input type="checkbox"/> 12 | <input type="checkbox"/> 23 |
| Parts/Spares | <input type="checkbox"/> 02 | <input type="checkbox"/> 13 | <input type="checkbox"/> 24 |
| Oil/Fuel | <input type="checkbox"/> 03 | <input type="checkbox"/> 14 | <input type="checkbox"/> 25 |
| Breakdown | <input type="checkbox"/> 04 | <input type="checkbox"/> 15 | <input type="checkbox"/> 26 |
| Insurance/Finance | <input type="checkbox"/> 05 | <input type="checkbox"/> 16 | <input type="checkbox"/> 27 |
| Fuel Cards..... | <input type="checkbox"/> 06 | <input type="checkbox"/> 17 | <input type="checkbox"/> 28 |
| Training | <input type="checkbox"/> 07 | <input type="checkbox"/> 18 | <input type="checkbox"/> 29 |
| Venue/Attraction Tickets | <input type="checkbox"/> 08 | <input type="checkbox"/> 19 | <input type="checkbox"/> 30 |
| Ferry Crossing | <input type="checkbox"/> 09 | <input type="checkbox"/> 20 | <input type="checkbox"/> 31 |
| Hotel Bookings..... | <input type="checkbox"/> 10 | <input type="checkbox"/> 21 | <input type="checkbox"/> 32 |
| Theatre Tickets | <input type="checkbox"/> 11 | <input type="checkbox"/> 22 | <input type="checkbox"/> 33 |
| Other (please specify)..... | <input type="checkbox"/> 34 | | |

5. What type of work does your company undertake?

(Tick all that apply)

- Private Hire ☐ 01
Day Excursions ☐ 02
British Tours..... ☐ 03
European Tours ☐ 04
Local Government Contracts ☐ 05
Emergency/Breakdown Services ☐ 06

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DinersClub/Amex card for the amount of £

Expiry date/.....

By invoice: Please invoice my company ☐

Card number:

Signed

Name

Job Title

Company

Address

Postcode.....Tel:

Return to: Kerry Young, *Coach and Bus Week*, Subscription Department,
EMAP Automotive Ltd., Wentworth House, Wentworth Street,
Peterborough PE1 1DS
or phone 01733 467051 today



1995 M Volvo B9 Van Hool, 38 reclining seats,
Exterior Black & Grey, Interior Multi Coloured Moquette, Radio,
Pa, Cassette, Wiring for TV/Video, Driver Operated Door, ABS,
Exhaust Brake, Side Locker, Toilet, Double Glazing, Tinted
Windows, Blinds, Crew Seat and No Rear Window.
Ref: 6871



1994 L Volvo B10M Jonckheere 45, 49/53 reclining seats,
Exterior White, Interior Multi Moquette, Radio, Pa, Stereo, Wheel
Discs, Driver Operated Door, ABS, Exhaust Brake, Side Locker,
Sunken Toilet, Double Glazing, Tinted Windows, Blinds,
Continental Door, Crew Seat, Soft Trim, Air Suspension.
Ref: 6624



1993 K Volvo B10M Jonckheere 45L, 49/53 reclining seats,
Exterior White, Red, Yellow and Orange, Interior Grey Moquette,
Radio, Pa, Cassette, Front Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door,
ABS, Exhaust Brake, Side Locker, Toilet, Double Glazing, Tinted
Windows, Blinds, Continental Door, Crew Seat and Wire for
TV/Video. CHOICE OF TWO (2) SIMILAR VEHICLES.
Ref: 6783

1994 M Volvo B10M Premiere 350, 49/53 seats,
Exterior White, Interior Grey Multi Coloured Discs, Driver Operated
Door, ABS, Exhaust Brake, Side Locker, Tinted Windows,
Curtains, Toilet, Double Glazing, Continental Door and Crew
Seat.
Ref: 6931

YEATES

BIG VALUE

TOP QUALITY USED COACHES
YOU WON'T BUY BETTER FOR LESS



1993 K/L Volvo B10M Excilibur 3.5, 49/53 reclining seats,
Exterior White, Interior Multi Coloured Moquette, Radio, Pa,
Stereo, Front Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door, ABS, Exhaust
Brake, Side Locker, Sunken Toilet, Double Glazing, Webasto,
Tinted Windows, Curtains, Continental Door, Crew Seat, Soft
Trim, Drinks Trays and Fridge. CHOICE OF FOUR (4) SIMILAR
VEHICLES.
Ref: 6682



1993 L Volvo B10M Premiere 320, 53 reclining seats,
Exterior White, Blue & Orange, Interior Grey, Blue & Orange
Moquette, Radio, Pa, Cassette, Front Wheel Discs, Driver
Operated Door, ABS, Exhaust Brake, Side Locker, Double
Glazing, Tinted Windows, Curtains and No Rack Doors.
Ref: 6922

1992 J Volvo B10M Premiere 320, 53 reclining seats,
Exterior Cream & Red, Interior Duo Brown Moquette, Radio, Pa,
Cassette, Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door, ABS, Telma
Retarder, Side Locker, Double Glazing, Tinted Windows, Curtains,
Crew Seat and 3 piece Screen. CHOICE OF TWO (2) SIMILAR
VEHICLES.
Ref: 6843

1991 H Volvo B10M Paramount 3500, 50 reclining seats,
Exterior White, Interior Brown & Orange Moquette, Radio, Pa,
Cassette, Front Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door, ABS, Telma,
Side Locker, Toilet, Double Glazing, Webasto, Tinted Windows,
Blinds, Continental Door, Crew Seat, Wiring for TV/Video, Water
Boiler, Door to Parcel Racks and Drivers Fan.
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